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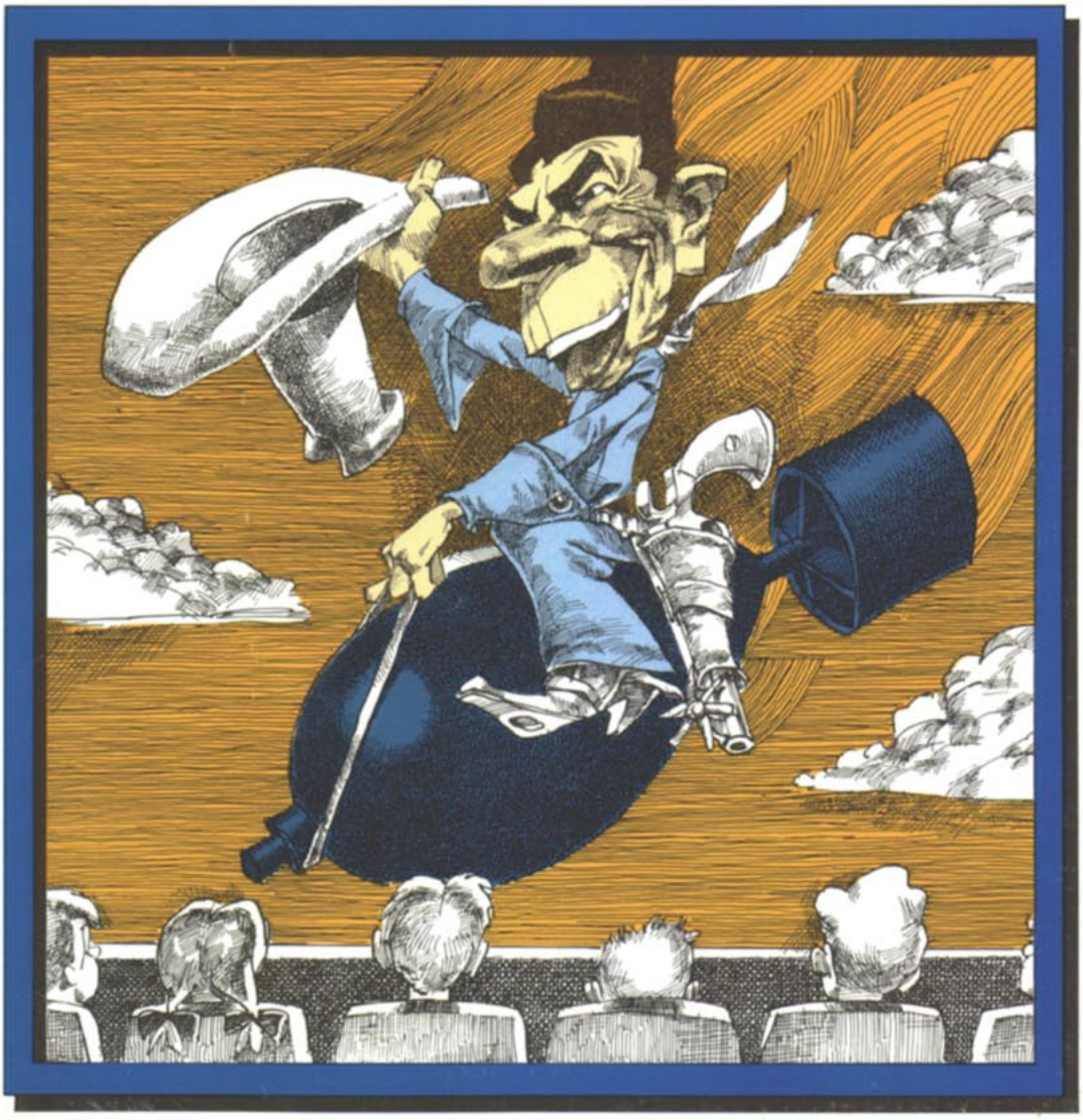
It's Official—We Can Limit Nuclear War

Who's Really to Blame for Love Canal?

Ronnie and the Bonzo Boys in

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW

By Peter Collier



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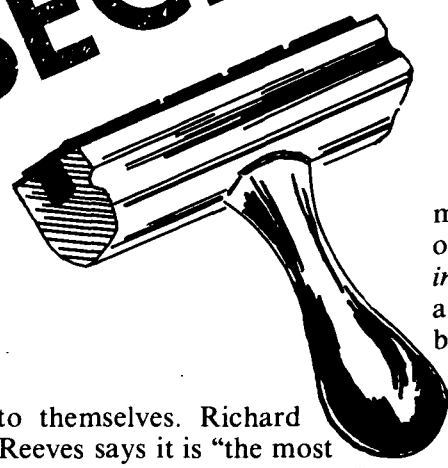

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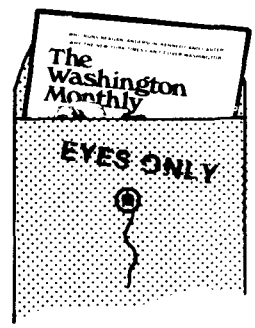

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SEPTEMBER 22, 1980

The Last Picture Show

PETER COLLIER **p. 13**

"He'll be effective," Ronald Reagan's advertising-executive brother promised in 1964. "We've tested him out with soap." Read about Ronnie's media wizardry—and, on p.15, the confessions of a former Young Republican—in our special double feature on the Grand Old Party.

Trouble in Shangri-La

TORY STEMPF **p. 18**

For thirty years, Tibet has been occupied territory—a pawn in an ancient geopolitical game played by China, India, and the Soviet Union. But the Chinese probably can't win without help from the dalai lama.

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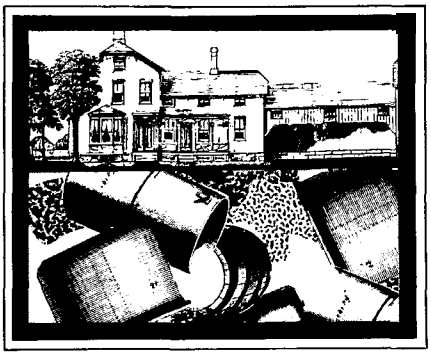
Chrysler's bail-out blues. Frank Sinatra is rehearsing his K-car song, and Uncle Sam has chipped in $1.5 billion in loan guarantees. The auto-market experts are unimpressed, however, and it looks like Chairman Lee will be begging at the trough again by the end of next year. (*RICHARD THAXTON*)

Politics ..... **p. 10**

'New look' from the Pentagon. The 'limited' nuclear exchange has figured in U.S. strategic planning for nearly two decades, but Jimmy Carter's Presidential Directive 59 makes it official—and brings us closer to war. (*FRED KAPLAN*)



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Gerry Sauer on *Laying Waste: The Poisoning of America by Toxic Chemicals*, by Michael Brown; Walter LaFeber on *Facing West*, by Richard Drinnon; Sharon Presley on *Authority*, by Richard Sennett.

Film ..... **p. 29**

Stephen Harvey reviews Brian DePalma's *Dressed to Kill*.

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A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

IN LATE AUGUST, RONald Reagan began shooting himself in the foot. While preaching a 1950s-type anti-Sovietism, he drove the Chinese wild with what amounted to a two-China policy; and he confided to a mass gathering of queer-baiting fundamentalists in Dallas that he saw "great flaws" in the theory of evolution. In this issue, Peter Collier probes the Reagan character as well as the appeal, noting that "the people who will elect Reagan have been donated to him by liberalism." As if to help prove this assertion, the Carter administration has hoisted the colors of Truman-Kennedy-Johnson military-liberalism. The declaration of counterforce and limited nuclear war as national policy is discussed by Fred Kaplan, while we deal editorially with improved plans to evacuate our leaders to places of safety when the time comes.

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RES PUBLICA

Canada—forever united

■ Canada tried to enhance its unity today by proclaiming an official national anthem—but there was no agreement on the lyrics.

The 100-year-old song ["O Canada"] has been sung for a long time as an unofficial anthem, and on Friday it was given legal sanction by the Parliament after some 17 years of dispute and 14 bills.

The dispute continues. The words sung today are still tentative because the political parties only agreed to a truce in time for today's ceremony and will be back squabbling over the words next fall.

There had been much debate over whether the [official ceremonial] choir should sing first in English or in French. Finally, in what one commentator called "a typically Canadian solution," the choir was divided into two and sang the two versions at the same time. The result was confusing and hard to follow. . . .

—*New York Times, July 2, 1980*

West Virginia authorities strike back at Grape Satan

■ Seyedashraf Mirhadi, an Iranian student, was charged with shoplifting for eating one grape, and his lawyer says he could be deported for such a crime.

Robert A. Hallowell, a spokesman for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, said yesterday that the agency would consider the case "on its merits" if Mirhadi were convicted.

Mirhadi, a 20-year-old junior at West Virginia Tech, was arrested June 13 after he ate one white seedless grape at a Kroger store in nearby Montgomery.

—*San Francisco Chronicle, July 24, 1980*

Ladies and gentlemen, choose your weapons

■ A woman who slashed her husband with a fork and the husband who retaliated with a tire iron have been arrested [in Colorado Springs, Colorado] and charged with dueling, police said.

—*Washington Post, June 11, 1980*

Civics lessons

■ Alice Z. Cuneo of *The San Jose News* reports that California welfare workers are subverting the efforts of voluntary agencies to put Indochinese refugees to work. The welfare workers, she writes, take refugees aside and explain to them that federal assistance money is theirs for the asking, and if they don't take it, "somebody else is going to get it". . . .

—*Washington Monthly, June 1980*

Commie spiders make lousy pets anyway

■ Increasing numbers of tarantulas were being imported as "pets." That was not unusual. What was unusual, the Customs Bureau and United States Agriculture Department noted in August 1976, was that tarantulas had somehow escaped the web of Government regulation. With 10,000 items on the tariff schedule, with the Code of Federal Regulations ample enough to fill a room, not one rule referred directly to tarantulas.

The situation today? "The same," says Philip Lima, in charge of permits at the Agriculture Department's Animal and Plant Inspection Service in Washington. No permit is needed to move a tarantula in interstate commerce, he says. The Customs Bureau, however, is more creative.

While there is no specific listing of tarantulas on the tariff schedule, there is this catchall: "other live animals not mentioned." Tarantulas, says Edward Kittredge, a customs spokesman in Washington, "would be classified as 'other live animals.'" They are duty-free in any case, he notes, unless they are Communist tarantulas. Those from the Soviet bloc are subject to a 15 percent tariff on their value, he says.

—*New York Times, July 20, 1980*

Stayin' alive in the New Army

■ The Army has gone disco.

Opened in February of 1979, the Ft. Knox Enlisted Club was heralded by the Army as an alternative for the young soldier tempted, and often bamboozled, by unsavory, off-post night spots. And the disco bar and grill has operated in the black ever since.

Pvt. Leroy Gatson of Glen Allan, Miss., is one of the enlisted club's fans.

"I like it here because you don't have to worry about violence," he said.

—*Los Angeles Times, June 7, 1980*

Cultural exchange: Part I . . .

■ The United States government mailed sensitive military manuals detailing American training methods for jungle and chemical warfare to the Soviet Union during the Vietnam war, according to Sen. Jim Sasser, D-Tenn.

Among the Department of Defense publications mailed to the Soviet Union between 1965 and 1970 were documents on jungle operations, troop movements, employment of chemical and biological agents, and Viet Cong terror tactics in South Vietnam, Sasser said.

Doug Hall, the senator's press secretary, said the document mailing took place under an obscure 1889 treaty which provided for the exchange of information between the United States and foreign countries.

In return for the vital information sent the Soviet Union, Hall said the United States received in return, Russian documents such as *Soviet Woman* and *Sport in the USSR.*

—*Memphis Press Scimitar, June 20, 1980*

. . . Cultural exchange: Part II

■ . . . now, after the installation of a monster 150,000-watt transmitter in Cuba, Floridians can have Radio Moscow in English with them on their clock radios and pocket transistors—in the car, on the beach, or while falling asleep at night.

What kind of programming does Radio Moscow think will attract American listeners? A recent evening's selection included a medley of hit songs from the Soviet Union (No. 1: "When Moldavians Get Together") and a long, long interview with Sasha, a 28-year-old worker in a Moscow truck factory . . . who talked through an interpreter about why he produced double his daily quota of trucks ("I like to work hard.").

—*New York Times, Apr. 30, 1980*

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The no-nukes syndrome

The new Luddites

AMERICANS OF ALL POLITICAL PERSUASIONS are beginning to realize that the best way to deal with any industry is to free it from all subsidies and controls and to subject it to the bracing discipline of the free market. We are already beginning to enjoy the benefits of deregulation of the airlines, and can anticipate similar easing of controls on the trucking industry and even, perhaps, on the railroads. One would think that the trend of opinion is to widen this spirit of decontrol to encompass all industries.

Yet one area of industrial activity seems consistently exempt from this trend. In the area of nuclear-generated power, opinion over the last few years has tended not toward deregulation and the elimination of subsidies, not toward abolishing or weakening the crippling regulations of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, not toward turning nuclear power over to the forces of the marketplace, but instead toward ever more extensive government regulation, to the point where the industry itself is in danger of being destroyed.

Government regulation has created grave problems in every industry it has touched, but only in the field of nuclear energy has the fashionable solution been to destroy the field itself. On its face, the cry of "no nukes" makes about as much sense as a call to shut down electricity to cure the regulatory ills of our public utilities. Yet demands to stop expansion of nuclear power or to shut down currently existing nuclear generators altogether have been the major political issue on college campuses for the last several years.

What is offered to justify such demands? Probably the weakest argument is that nuclear energy is a spinoff of wartime government activity and that for pacifist reasons the entire industry is irretrievably tainted and must be destroyed. But it would then follow that we would also have to abandon radar because it originated as a military device in World War II. It is an unfortunate fact of life that some—admittedly not many, but certainly some—products of continuing value that make life more tolerable are spawned by ill-willed men for the most pernicious motives. But it is as absurd to argue that the power of the atom should not be used for peaceful purposes because of its destructive origins as it would be to claim that we should stop any advances in rocketry and the use of rockets because the primary impetus to developments in the area came from Hitler's original desire to flatten London.

A more respectable argument against nukes is that they are particularly risky, and that therefore they must be banned. But the implications of this view are, at best, shaky. After all, everything in life is risky. Many thousands of people—including a high percentage of those not guilty of careless driving—are killed in automobile accidents each year. Yet no one has suggested that we outlaw cars. Risk cannot be abolished by government fiat, and any attempt to do so would put us all in cages, spoon-fed by our masters. Certain dams in the United States could conceivably kill up to 200,000 people if they were to burst, yet no one has yet suggested the absurd notion of dismantling the hydroelectric power industry. More apposite to nuclear energy, all innovations tend to be risky; dealing with these risks and developing ways to minimize them is a learning process. In the early days of the Industrial Revolution, steam engines often blew up. If some Ralph Nader of the eighteenth century had succeeded in having steam engines banned, there might have been no Industrial Revolution and millions of people now prospering would have starved.

There is no evidence that nuclear energy is any riskier than anything else; in fact, the risk of a serious nuclear accident is far less than the risk of any given dam collapsing—and the number of injuries would be far higher should a dam collapse. The one legitimate complaint that opponents of nuclear power have is that the federal government, by means of the Price-Anderson Act, limits and underwrites the liability of nuclear power plants, so that it is possible that more nuclear power plants exist than would have been the case without this assumption of risk by the taxpayer. But surely the remedy here is obvious: It is not to destroy the nuclear industry but to repeal the Price-Anderson Act, and then see whether the industry will be economically viable without it. Indeed, only the test of the market, and not the endless palaver of protectors, writers, or even economists, can decide whether an unsubsidized nuclear industry would be economically viable.

There is another side to federal intervention, however. For while the Nuclear Regulatory Commission subsidizes the nuclear power industry, the commission—like all regulatory agencies—restricts and hobbles everything within its jurisdiction, raises costs, and renders the industry's firms inefficient. The construction of nuclear power plants is artificially delayed for years by NRC controls and red tape. Like all government agencies the NRC is sensitive to its public image and has paid increasingly close attention to "all sides" before making a decision to grant a power plant a license to operate. The hearing process now consumes more than ten years and requires the submission of millions of pages of documentation from those seeking permission to build and operate a nuclear plant. This has caused a massive escalation in capital costs so that it currently takes anywhere from $1.5 billion to $2 billion to bring a nuclear plant on line. It is anyone's guess, if both the NRC and the Price-Anderson Act were abolished, whether the private nuclear power industry would flourish in the absence of controls or wither from lack of subsidy. Again, the way to find out is by deregulation.

A third antinuclear argument holds that, in contrast to all other industries, nuclear energy is not simply risky but, by emitting low-level radiation, imposes unique damage on the population. In the scare phrase of the antinuclear forces, nuclear power plants impose "random" cancers on the populace. But, in fact, almost everything gives off the same low-level radiation as do nuclear plants. Every year, for example,

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the stones of New York City's Grand Central Station give off more low-level radiation than is emitted by any single nuclear plant. The risks of acquiring cancer from low-level radiation are no higher from living near a nuclear power plant than they are from taking a plane trip from New York to Los Angeles. Are we to abolish airplanes, buildings, stones?

The average resident of the United States receives about 250 millirems annually from natural and man-made sources, outside of nuclear power plants. The additional dose imposed on the average American by the existence of the seventy-one nuclear power plants currently operating adds no more than .003 millirems. The NRC has determined that an annual dose of radiation of 500 millirems is well within any conceivable safety tolerances. And studies of the effects of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs have indicated no detectable cancers at any dose lower than 100,000 millirems/year. In other parts of the world, people have lived quite well for centuries around background radiation that sometimes reaches 88,000 millirems/year. In contrast, the total radiation released by nuclear power plants in the United States averages no more than 10,000 millirems per plant. Such a dose could be received only if one were to stand touching the plant wall without moving for one full year.

The antinuke propagandists have tried to counter these facts by claiming that the kind of radiation emitted by nuclear energy is qualitatively different from that given off by stones or buildings. But this argument is based on simple ignorance of what the unit of radiation—a rem—means. The measurement is based on the effect of radiation on human tissue, so that one rem of radiation emitted by one source has the same effects on the human body as one rem from any other source.

Beyond this, even though scientists and regulatory bodies all use a methodology known as the "linear hypothesis" to set tolerable radiation exposures, many scientists believe that this approach overstates the health hazards of radiation. There is no proof that very low levels of radiation absorbed over long periods of time have effects identical to those of large doses over a short period. But even if low-level radiation is harmful in proportionately small doses, banning nuclear power would eliminate only a very small fraction of this radiation.

The nineteenth-century economist Thomas Malthus theorized an ongoing poverty-ridden society constantly fighting for meager subsistence as the size of the population outraced the food supply. Many of the better-known antinuclear protesters—Barry Commoner, Ralph Nader, Paul Ehrlich, Tom Hayden, and Jane Fonda among them—jumped on a neo-Malthusian "population explosion" platform some years back. From this perspective they channeled their protest activities into an ecological crusade to "democratize" American industry, based on the notion that industrialization itself was both dangerous and ugly. In so doing, they have become the twentieth century's Luddites, opposed in principle to the only salvation from the poverty and sickness that they profess to seek to minimize. Malthus's theoretical system was invalidated by his failure to allow for technical change. The modern neo-Malthusian Luddites have improved on his vision by simply condemning technical change as evil, thereby creating an upside-down world where progress itself is constantly on trial. No industry can prove a negative: that is, that its techniques and output are safe. Under our system of law, it is up to those who feel they are injured to show such injury. To operate a nation on any other assumption is to invite a retrograde move to the caves where, like it or not, those individuals remaining would bombard themselves with the low-level radiation from the potassium in their blood streams. ❏

The new flying Führerbunker

Last call, Holocaust Airlines

LET US CONSIDER PRESIDENTIAL Directive 58. Number 59 (see p. 10) discusses Mr. Carter's plans for a more precise holocaust. Number 58 is the getaway plan by which the President and his gang will blow Washington for safer climes before Washington itself blows. In the more sober words of Richard Burt, the Defense Department press agent at the *New York Times*, Number 58 was issued to achieve "more effective procedures for protecting civilian and military leaders in event of nuclear war." Civilian leaders such as the President and his cabinet, for example.

These are not altogether new plans. Just as pyromaniacs always lay out their own escape routes, so all nuclear-age American presidents have taken care to provide for their own postholocaust survival. During Eisenhower's tenure, bunkers were provided for the President and Congress. Though not especially effective (need we recall the final hours of Adolf and Eva in the Führerbunker?), they were reassuring to Americans who still remembered the courage of Churchill during the blitz. With the sixties and the seventies, however, there came progress: And the presidents turned to the heavens. No bunker could be completely bombproof, the Pentagon pointed out. But if the best and the brightest were airborne, skittering hither and thither, dodging mushroom clouds, surely then they would be safe. For born-again Christians it would be proof positive of life after death. So it was that the Holocaust Command went airborne, with the code name, Kneecap.

This has been the plan, more or less, for almost twenty years. The planes and the presidents have changed. Directive 58 is merely the latest refinement. Now the President and his cabinet and his computers (which talk to each other in a private language called JOVIAL) will be able to buzz around for up to seventy-two hours in a specially equipped jumbo jet that is kept ever ready somewhere outside Washington.

Directive 58 is meant to assure all Americans that through the preservation of our leader, we shall all earn eternal life—a kind of reverse Eucharist, as if by breaking the bodies of the multitudes Jesus would have survived the Crucifixion. Despite the new assurances, however, some problems have arisen, and we can only hope that they are corrected.

First, of course, is the matter of the roll call, or, as it is often called, the "Survivors List" of Americans who will provide "essential and noninterruptible services." Sometimes the select are simply called "the noninterruptibles." Cabinet members are all noninterruptible, as are the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon. Some members of Congress are.

Periodic holocaust drills have revealed other disturbing problems. Heretofore, the arrangement has been for a helicopter to swoop onto the Washington Mall as soon as the alert is sounded. Instantly each cabinet officer—or more frequently, his immediate subordinate, for the purposes of the drill—summons his personal chauffeur and the two race down to the mall. The ever faithful servant then whisks his boss from the limousine, helps him hobble across the grass to the hovering

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chopper, and waves loyally as the load of noninterruptibles soars to safety. All went well until a drill in November 1978 had to be cancelled because of slippery streets.

Some skeptics have also asked whether the chauffeurs might not reassess their priorities should the real thing happen, since they have not been assigned seats on the helicopter. The chauffeurs might of course petition for bunker status as the price of ultimate loyalty, but if they do so they will have to compete with at least four thousand others who already hold such reservations. According to one detailed report, the vast Mt. Weather facility in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia holds priority space for selected construction workers who own their own bulldozers. Their services have been deemed vital, civil defense analysts explain, because of the pressing need for mass graves following any thermonuclear war.

Once airborne, the noninterruptibles may also face their own special dilemmas. Work is continuing on how to overcome the aggravating radio static resulting from 80-megaton blasts, and it has been proposed that windows be omitted from the command plane so that the President could more easily avoid glancing at the unsightly nuclear eczema down below.

Still there remains the troubling matter of intense radiation, against which the aluminum and magnesium skins of most airplanes provide inadequate protection. Imagine how distressed the citizenry might become if in their last heaves of radiation sickness they were to look up into the night and see their President's plane glowing like a giant radium dial.

Therefore, as a final gesture of loyalty to the survival of the noninterruptibles, we the interruptibles propose a national citizens' drive for the collection of unused bullets. Once gathered they can be melted down and transformed into a giant lead-plated DC-10 into which all current noninterruptibles and all declared candidates for the post of top noninterruptible will be given a test flight into the eye of a nuclear firestorm, thereby opening the way to a new millennium of genuinely uninterrupted peace. ❏

Deregulating cable

Clear the airwaves

THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMmissions's recent repeal of two of its most significant restraints against cable television represents a triumph for the American consumer. In the wake of decisions by the Civil Aeronautics Board and the Interstate Commerce Commission to free their respective industries from stultifying regulation, the FCC's action marks a major step forward in letting the marketplace, not government bureaucrats, discover and serve consumer needs.

The decision, adopted by a 4-to-3 vote of the commissioners, frees cable systems from previous limits on the number of distant signals they may carry, and lifts restrictions on their right to carry syndicated programs that duplicate the fare shown by local stations.

Naturally, broadcasters and other protected groups in the broadcasting industry are howling bitterly against the "dangers" of competition. Several TV station owners have filed legal appeals in the federal courts to block the FCC decision, arguing that it threatens to snuff out local independent stations. The National Association of Broadcasters, the Motion Picture Association, and the Association of Independent Television Stations are taking up arms to stuff the cable genie back into its bottle. After all, they have never before had to work for their profits; government franchises did the trick. But now the value of those franchises is in doubt.

These industry associations, of course, assure us that they have only the best interests of the consumer at heart. A National Association of Broadcasters' report warned a couple of years ago that cable would "transmit borderline pornography, deceptive and irresponsible advertising, subversive propaganda, the outpourings of the lunatic fringe and the appeals of countless others whose appearances have thus far been minimized by broadcasters' responsibility to program in the public interest." Since the FCC adopted its new ruling, NBC has attacked cable as a threat to broadcasters who serve their local communities (since when was NBC concerned with the quality of local programming?), and ABC has called for Congress to "rectify the unfair competition" posed by deregulated cable.

Judging by the number of investors rushing to get into the highly profitable cable business, it would appear that consumers have long been thirsting for a little of that "unfair competition" as an alternative to the cozy, uncompetitive world of network TV. Since cable systems offer a nearly unlimited number of channels and cover much larger markets than do individual broadcast stations, they can profitably afford to supply programming to minority markets that the networks ignore. Consumers are happy to pay for this service, and cable firms are happy to make a profit by satisfying these needs.

If the broadcasters would now play the role of spoilers, they are not solely to blame. After all, for more than thirty years the FCC has thrown up spurious "public interest" doctrines to shackle competitive forces in the television business. This anticompetitive thrust was embodied in the FCC's allocation doctrine, which limited the number and range of stations in each community, and in the policy of "localism," which forced stations to adopt unprofitable (because often unwanted) locally oriented programming.

Because cable is inherently nonlocal, the FCC has long tried to hamper and constrict the new technology. In 1965, as cable companies were beginning to sprout up all over the United States, the FCC began throwing roadblocks in the way of further expansion. It prohibited pay-TV from competing for programming with broadcast stations, limited cable companies' access to microwave facilities, and froze any further importation of distant signals. Finally, the FCC demanded that new cable networks provide as many as four public access channels, at virtually no charge to users, under the doctrine of "localism." Fortunately, a federal appeals court ruled two years ago that the FCC had exceeded its mandate, and had probably violated the first and fifth amendments of the Constitution to boot.

Now, at last, a bare majority of the commission has acknowledged the value of consumer choice and the benefits of competition. Unfortunately, the FCC defends its decision with the assertion that broadcasters will lose neither audiences nor profits to cable. But should that empirical claim be proven false, will the FCC then reverse its course? If broadcasters fail the stiff test of the market, will government regulators once again rush to the aid of their client industry? Will technological progress be subverted by the political demands of a declining industry? As long as the industry remains subject to the whims of a government regulatory apparatus, these scenarios must be taken seriously. The fight is not yet over. ❏

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LETTERS

Letters to the editor should be addressed to INQUIRY Magazine, 747 Front St., San Francisco, California 94111. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for length when necessary.

The good, the bad, and Darth Vader

ARE YOU FOLKS AT INQUIRY running some sort of good-bad review contest? One issue your readers are treated to cogent and thought-provoking film reviews by Diane Jacobs; the next there is gibberish from Elliott Stein. Mr. Stein's review of *The Empire Strikes Back* [July 7 & 21] is a classic example of how not to review a film. I can accept that he did not like the movie (although I don't understand why); however, what I can't forgive is his wholesale stupidity in giving the plot surprises away. It may shock Mr. Stein to know that there are some people who may want to defy his edicts and discover a film's nuances for themselves. I can just imagine the first line of an Elliott Stein review of *Citizen Kane*: "Rosebud is a sled."

TERRY JACKSON
Sacramento, Calif.

With the September 1 issue, Stephen Harvey returned as INQUIRY's regular film critic.
—THE EDITORS

Symbols of abuse

IN ANSWER TO THE LETTER in your Aug. 4 & 18 issue in which Richard Fuerle stated, "A picture of a woman being abused . . . is only a piece of paper with ink on it," let me say that the statement astounded me. Mr. Fuerle seems not to realize that the printing press altered civilization. The *Communist Manifesto,* just marks on paper, sparked a revolution. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* expressed ideas that underlay a program of genocide. The "word" in the Bible has converted the souls of thousands of people. Picasso's splotches of paint on canvas touch deep aesthetic sensibilities.

Women Against Pornography members are sophisticated enough to know that there is a distinction between symbols and acts but they also know that our minds create, communicate, and *react* to symbols. There is an intimate interrelationship among thoughts, words/pictures, and deeds. It is simple-minded to believe otherwise. Pornographic stories and pictures nourish a male mentality that gets turned on by the abuse of women.

JOANNE R. BRONARS
Elmont, N.Y.

Teen-age heartbreak

*THERE IS A MORE REAL*istic and down-to-earth perspective on the Stein sisters case than that which Nat Hentoff offers [July 7 & 21].

Granted, a thoughtful and generous-spirited school board might have chosen a commencement date when all graduating seniors could attend. One wishes they had had the decency to do so. But bureaucrats aren't noted for decency or thoughfulness, and they chose otherwise.

This presented Susan and Lynn Stein with a scheduling conflict and a disappointment—something that occurs in every life more or less often. There is certainly no interference with their free exercise of religion, since they are free to choose their Sabbath observance over the commencement exercise. Nor do they suffer any terrible, warping deprivation if they miss the commencement. For despite the overblown legal rhetoric about a once-in-a-lifetime event that one remembers forever, we can be sure that most adults retain only the dimmest recollection of this briefly important event. The real concerns of living quickly overtake our memories of that hour or two in an overheated gym. Kept in its proper perspective, it is a big teen-age disappointment, little more, that confronts Susan and Lynn.

What's notable about this case, and characteristic of our time, is that the sisters (or their parents) find this inconvenience and disappointment so intolerable that they are willing to invoke the power of the court to force thousands of other students to accommodate the scheduling problems of these two. This readiness to dictate to the rest of the community is undoubtedly what the other students reacted against, recognizing the girls' behavior as self-centered, unattractive, and overbearing. The students' lack of sympathy need not be characterized as "celebrating the sisters' pain" or as anti-Semitic in origin. It is just a normal, healthy reaction against aggressive me-firstism.

Of course, the Steins' litigiousness is hardly unique. The inclination to seek courtroom remedies for life's every little inconvenience (often with tortuously contrived constitutional arguments) is a thriving and destructive trend in our society. So is the courts' frequent readiness to take these frivolous actions seriously and grant relief.

In denying the sisters' claim, Judge Middleton showed uncommon good sense for our times. And the usually astute Nat Hentoff has been amazingly suckered by the rhetoric of lawyers who cynically invoke constitutional protection in a trivial cause. If that cause should succeed on appeal, it will only cheapen—not vitalize—the First Amendment.

WILLIAM EWINGSON
Evanston, Ill.

Subsidized veterans

RE. THE VIOLATION OF THE autonomy of the individual in VA hospitals [July 7 & 21] by physicians (which you people describe as "doctors" as if there were somehow a relationship between the status of possessing an earned doctoral degree and that of working in a medical vocation), the real underlying crime is the system of emoluments and supports, such as the VA hospitals, which provides medical care irrelevant to and unconnected with any service time injury.

TOMMY W. ROGERS
Jackson, Miss.

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CORPORATE STATE

RICHARD THAXTON

Chrysler's bail-out blues

ON THE DAY THE CHRYSLER Corporation reported it had suffered the largest quarterly loss ever for an American car company—$536 million between April and June of this year—Frank Sinatra was rehearsing a new ad jingle he's singing to help sell Chrysler's salvation.

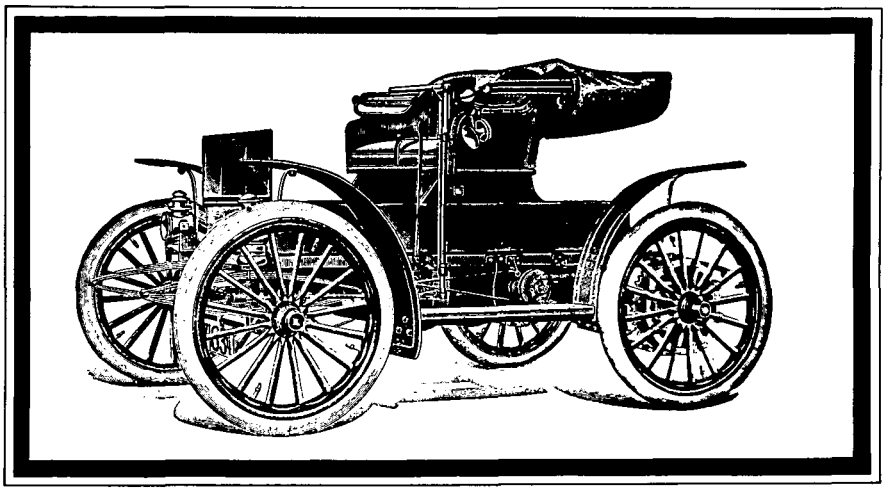
The lyrics remain shrouded in secrecy, known only to the Chrysler cognoscenti and to composer Charlie Strauss, the man who gave us "Put On A Happy Face." Doubtless these new lyrics project a very happy face for Chrysler in 1981. Surely they promise a very good year for small-car sales and high profits, too. We'll slap a tariff on the Japs. And get them on the run. In 1981.

Once more with feeling, Mr. Sinatra. There's $1.5 billion of tax money riding on the success of your song and other efforts to convince the public that Chrysler is in business to stay and that its new, gas-saving "K-cars" are high quality merchandise.

Unfortunately, 1981 is likely to produce few happy faces at Chrysler—with or without import quotas on the popular Japanese compacts. Thanks to the Carter administration, taxpayers are likely to end up footing the bill for all those Sinatra commercials and for years of Chrysler mismanagement. If Chrysler declares bankruptcy and defaults on its debts, we will have to make good on the $1.5 billion in loans to the firm that the U.S. Chrysler Loan Guarantee Board ensured in June.

Last year, when Chrysler got the remarkable insight that OPEC had made gas-guzzling cars obsolete, the nation's tenth largest industrial manufacturer was on much more wobbly footing than was Ford or General Motors. Accordingly, many, if not most, auto-market analysts, and even some Treasury Department officials, doubt the $1.5 billion will suffice to let Chrysler convert from producing its bloated behemoths to turning out lean little K-cars.

"We give Chrysler two chances—slim or none," said Gary Stern, an auto-market analyst at Shilling and Company. He and many other experts predict Chrysler will be back begging at the trough by the end of next year. At that point the United States must either let the firm die, with the taxpayers $1.5 billion poorer, or rescue it again at the risk of becoming a permanent guardian of Chrysler, a Father Flanagan to the Boys Town of U.S. industry.



BEFORE LOOKING AT THE evidence to support this somber appraisal of Chrysler's prospects, it is well to recall that the company is not merely receiving indirect financial support: It has, in fact, been quasi-nationalized. The loan guarantee board's managerial role in the company has been increasing since Congress passed the bail-out bill last December.

The bill requires that before any guaranteed loans are authorized, Chrysler must demonstrate it will again become a going concern and wean itself from government support by 1983. This requirement has given the board substantial leverage over the firm, leverage federal officials have used to shape Chrysler's survival plans down to such details as the number of "frills" on the K-car.

The "fiscally conservative" Carter administration's rationale for this deep penetration into a once private firm is that a bankrupt Chrysler would be catastrophic for the economy. With the philosophical clarity he is wont to display, Treasury Secretary G. William Miller told Congress that bailing out a failing company is wrong—except in those cases where it is right. He said the welfare costs of the bankruptcy alone would exceed the $1.5 billion cost of a default on the guaranteed loan.

Congress was duly persuaded and the loan board went to work on Chrysler's survival strategy. Sources close to the negotiations reported that Chrysler chairman Lee Iacocca won the latest $300 million loan installment on July 15 only after he agreed to fire 20 percent of the firm's white-collar staff. A similar slash occurred last March, after 40 percent of Chrysler's factory workers had already been laid off. Over this spring and summer, a number of Chrysler plants have closed and several lines of cars and trucks have been dropped.

Chrysler, in short, is no longer the huge company whose bankruptcy Miller warned would devastate the economy. The loan board, which helped steer the course of Chrysler's diminution, has undermined its own initial rationale for intervention. And that rationale was weak from the start, for it failed to take into account forces that would take up the slack in a Chrysler bankruptcy. Both GM and Ford could have been expected to move in and fill the gap left by Chrysler, especially since both currently have excess capacity, according to a recent study by Shilling. The study concludes that rehiring at Ford and GM would have offset jobs lost by Chrysler workers and foreign car producers might well move in and buy up Chrysler plants in the United States.

So it is that Chrysler has become a rather shriveled outfit, entirely dependent for its survival on the K-car. Considering that Chrysler's image is a problem—due largely to widespread news

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coverage of its difficulties—one can understand the importance Iacocca places on public relations.

And considering the stake the taxpayer now has in Chrysler's survival, it would seem Frank Sinatra is in a position of high public responsibility as the Chrysler Celebrity, a role which perhaps should be subject to confirmation by the Senate. (This is not to slight the public-spirited Sinatra, who has agreed to do his bit for a mere one dollar.) Sinatra is an effective showman and Iacocca a high-powered salesman. But even the PR cannot sell a mudslide as a marvel. Chrysler's losses, its sales record, debt, and underlying weaknesses have combined to make its prospects for survival dismal indeed.

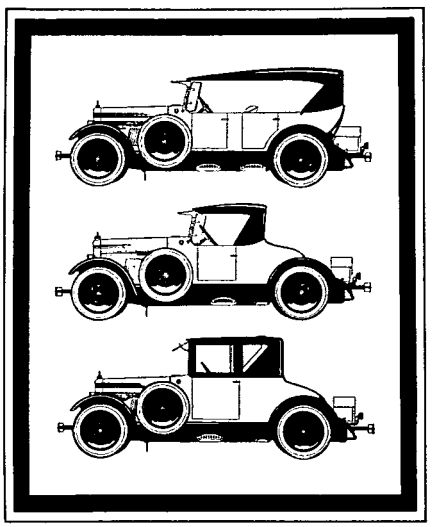
IF CHRYSLER CONTINUES its financial hemorrhage at anything close to the current rate—each day it gets $5 million deeper in the red—the firm will almost certainly have run through its $1.5 billion by the end of 1981. As the recession took hold this year, Chrysler's position deteriorated so rapidly that loss estimates—revised almost weekly by the loan guarantee board—could not keep pace with the slide. In the first six months of the year, Chrysler lost nearly $1 billion, the same staggering amount it lost in all of 1979.

Meanwhile, as its large petroholic cars pile up in the showrooms, Chrysler's sales have gone into a tailspin. From January through July 10, the firm's sales dropped 34 percent to 342,000. Its share of the domestic market fell to below 9.5 percent from 11.4 percent a year earlier. Each declining percentage point lost Chrysler about $500 million in revenue. Meanwhile, with the spurt in demand for gas-saving cars, foreign producers' share of the market has jumped to 30 percent, from 18 percent in 1978 and 23 percent in 1979.

In assessing Chrysler's survival prospects there is also the small matter of a debt well in excess of $5 billion. A substantial chunk of that was owed to the 300 or so banks that were negotiating with government and Chrysler officials last May over terms of the bail-out package. To lessen the risk of a Chrysler default, Congress required that these banks, all with a stake in Chrysler's future, provide $2 billion in private financing before the government could issue its $1.5 billion loan guarantee.

Many of the banks were so pessimistic about Chrysler's chances that they wanted to cut their losses and run, and some said so publicly. It took intense pressure by the government—Treasury Secretary Miller personally lobbied the presidents of tiny banks in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Rockford, Illinois—to convince these "recalcitrants" to accept a compromise wherein most of the $2 billion "loan" would be in the form of interest-rate concessions.

The resulting loan package actually seemed to thwart the intention of Congress. Chrysler got its guaranteed loans. But it got virtually no hard cash from the banks. Thus the firm is that much more vulnerable to a cash squeeze if its optimistic projections for recovery do not materialize.



Many of the factors bedeviling Chrysler, such as the recession and the cost of small-car production, are of course causing problems for other car manufacturers. Ford is suffering heavy losses—two-thirds of a billion dollars in the last three quarters. Even GM, which saw the light on compact cars earlier than the others, is finding the road bumpy just now, having lost $412 million in the second quarter of this year.

Neither of these other firms has been granted guaranteed loans. Why then has Chrysler—the only firm seriously in danger of going bankrupt? Largely because of a management crisis that wracked the company throughout the 1970s. A former executive recalls how continuing purges eliminated executives in engineering, manufacturing, and accounting. The results—a constant need for retraining, and a lack of continuity in policy—were evident in Chrysler's poor performance. In the 1970s Chrysler, whose products were not especially popular, could generally turn a profit only by underselling its competitors, according to a 1977 Treasury Department staff analysis.

The firm lacked the efficiency and economies of scale of its two chief U.S. rivals, and its earnings record was mediocre in the years leading up to the billion dollar losses of 1979 and 1980. Chrysler lost money in 1970, 1974, 1975, and 1978. It made relatively little in 1971 and 1972. By last year, Chrysler was in the anteroom of the funeral parlor, and largely due to its own mistakes.

IT WAS IN THESE CIRCUM- stances that Iacocca, newly converted from the doctrine of free enterprise to that of creative federalism, came to Washington to panhandle. He begged, pleaded, and cajoled. He castigated the administration for its apparent reluctance to enter the "private sector" in the same salty language he used to use to attack government meddling in Detroit. Iacocca blamed Chrysler's plight on the cost of government regulation of the auto industry.

It may have been obvious to many that Chairman Lee was talking through his hat; that other firms had endured the same safety and environmental regulations required of Chrysler without nearing bankruptcy; and that aiding Chrysler would be rewarding bad management, and was unwise and unjust.

But these points weren't obvious to the Carter administration in 1979. With the election looming, Carter's aides were alarmed by what might happen if Chrysler went under. Unemployment could reach 30 percent in Detroit, quite possibly leading to riots in the summer of 1980, a revolt by the United Auto Workers, the loss of Michigan's electoral votes, and other political fallout.

Under the circumstances, the administration decided to forgo its newly adopted fiscal conservatism and indulge in a little election-year largesse. "The nation's tenth largest industrial corporation is not going to go bankrupt during the Carter administration," declared Stuart Eizenstat, the President's chief domestic policy adviser.

In November, when Chrysler announced that it would close its doors within a few weeks if no aid were forthcoming, Carter's people urged Congress to authorize $750 million in government-backed loans for the firm. The administration revised the estimate of Chrysler's needs to $1.5 billion as the company's condition deteriorated. And they lobbied successfully to get the bill through Congress in December, despite the bitter objection of Senator William Proxmire, who warned, "We are . . . ignoring the decisions of the market-

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place and distorting the forces of competition."

Although the bail-out bill stipulated that Chrysler must abandon the federal teat by 1983, the prospects for meeting that deadline are growing grim. The chairman of the loan board, G. William Miller, has maintained his happy face in public, and the board has voted unanimously to approve loan installments, but the staff has grown increasingly pessimistic.

On July 15 the board approved a $300 million installment on the guaranteed loan. Once again Miller said that he thought Chrysler's prospects were excellent. But, on the same day, the staff released a report revealing that Chrysler's condition had deteriorated dramatically in the three weeks since the first $500 million installment was issued.

"It is doubtful that Chrysler could survive [under the current federal aid package] without drastic actions to cut costs as required," the staff reported. Only after Iacocca agreed to the sharp white-collar cuts did the board approve the $300 million installment, according to sources close to the negotiations. Yet many observers, including some treasury officials, doubt that even Iacocca's latest cutbacks will do the trick.

TO UNDERSTAND WHY Chrysler's situation has deteriorated in recent weeks, keep in mind that the car firm's hopes for survival depend entirely on selling each and every K-car it produces. The surprising sharpness of the recession and the bad publicity surrounding Chrysler's struggle to get approval for the guaranteed loans have hurt sales prospects for the K-car.

Ominously, there has been a recent drop in the sales of those few compacts—the Omnis and Horizons—that Chrysler is already producing. Until last month, the government was predicting Chrysler would sell all it produced of these models. Now the loan board says the recession, combined with growing fears that Chrysler will go bankrupt, has cut sales and further weakened the company.

The second worst recession since World War II is hardly an auspicious occasion to launch a new car: Automobile purchases are postponable, and in recessions people focus on the necessities. President Carter's most recent estimate of the severity of the recession—one of the gloomiest official forecasts in thirty-five years—calls for an unemployment rate of 8.5 percent this year, at least 8 percent through 1981, and an unusually slow recovery from the slump. Nevertheless, Iacocca fervently maintains that the K-car will "take off" very quickly and that Chrysler will turn a profit by the final quarter of 1980.

Ironically, Iacocca might be deriving some hope for his beleaguered firm from the plight of his fellow U.S. car makers, Ford and GM. Their losses over the course of the year (about $1 billion), along with Chrysler's, have forced the Carter administration to call for a new, if as yet ill-defined, "industrial policy" to aid the entire auto sector. The policy, Carter tells us, will entail a "close-knit permanent relationship" between government and the car industry.

"Industrial policy" is the administration's latest buzzword, following in the tradition of "energy policy" and "human rights policy." When it comes to cars, the Carter industrial policy relies heavily on import quotas, which is ironic considering Carter's strong antiprotectionist arguments during the Venice economic summit this summer, and at the three previous summit economic conferences he attended.

Transportation Secretary Neil Goldschmidt is reportedly working hard behind the scenes to engineer import quotas on Japanese compacts—which have captured one-fourth of the U.S. market. In his stopover in Detroit en route to Japan, Carter vowed to car industry executives that he would press for mandatory import quotas if the International Trade Commission determines that imports are seriously harming the American car industry. He urged the commission to expedite its evaluation of the issue, but the panel refused to rule before election day. Nevertheless, some administration sources believe the President may decide to advocate import restrictions during the campaign while pressuring the Japanese to agree to voluntary import quotas.

Such protectionism would slash the foreign share of the domestic auto market and restore American jobs. A presidential task force recently concluded that holding Japanese car imports to 1979 levels would bring up to 100,000 U.S. auto workers back on the job.

THE ACTUAL RESULTS OF A protectionist policy, however, would in all likelihood only make it clear that—in the present context—what is good for Toyota is good for America, at least up to a point. Squeezing out Toyota and the other foreign car manufacturers would not only raise car prices here by decreasing the supply of autos, as the President's task force acknowledges. It would also prove self-defeating for the American car firms.

Unlike the British, the Japanese do not prop up ailing industries; they just cut them adrift.

Import restrictions would not allow the Big Three to convert to small-car production any quicker—they're working flat-out at conversion already. But the restrictions on imports could easily spark a trade war that would close foreign markets to American firms just when, at long last, they have small cars to sell.

Iacocca, it seems, is willing to incur such damage in the hope of recouping Chrysler's share of the domestic market. He speaks of the administration's new "industrial policy" as a "page out of Japan's book."

The analogy could scarcely be further off the mark. The Japanese do not prop up their ailing industries; they cut them adrift. The British tend to prop them up, as witness British Leyland, the struggling state-owned car firm now known simply as BL, Ltd. Britain's taxpayers have borne several industries on their backs for years, despite staggering losses. But nationalizing these firms has amounted to nothing more than a grossly inefficient form of social welfare. A major British rationale for continuing to endure these losses is that letting the huge firms go under would be devastating for the economy, and put hundreds of thousands out of work—precisely Secretary Miller's justification for bailing out Chrysler.

With American steel and textile firms also in trouble because of stiff competition from imports, one must hope that Chrysler is not the precedent for massive government intervention in the economy—and a protectionist trade policy—that it appears to be. Otherwise, we may expect to see Frank Sinatra on the company charity circuit, singing encore after encore of "Send in the Clowns." ❑

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POLITICS

FRED KAPLAN

'New look' from the Pentagon

"U.S. RESHAPING N-STRATegy against Soviets." So flashed the ominous headline over William Beecher's front-page story in the *Boston Globe* July 27. It took ten days for *New York Times*man Richard Burt to catch up, but his analysis on August 6 told the same story—the Carter administration had decided to transform this nation's policy on nuclear deterrence and nuclear warfare.

Beecher, Burt, and virtually the entire Pentagon press corps recited what has become the conventional wisdom: that until recently, the United States had pursued a policy of "assured destruction" (which cynics dubbed "Mutual Assured Destruction" to get that catchy acronym, MAD). This meant that if the Soviets attacked us with nuclear weapons, we would strike back massively against Soviet cities and industries, wiping out the USSR as a twentieth-century society; such a horrifying prospect would deter the Soviets from entertaining nuclear adventurism of any sort. But now, continues this tale, the Soviets are developing the capability to launch limited nuclear strikes against American land-based missiles. To deal with this new threat, President Carter signed Presidential Directive 59, giving U.S. strategic forces the option to launch *limited* strikes against Soviet *military* targets, especially their land-based missiles.

And that, dear readers, is the revolution that Richard Burt tells us "is almost certain to enliven the debate on nuclear policy."

But those with a memory for these matters can only reflect with bemusement on how so few things change in the weird world of nuclear strategy. For a glance at the past reveals that there is really nothing new about this so-called new strategy. Indeed, the United States has been following the basic tenets of this strategy ever since Robert McNamara and his whiz kids revised nuclear targeting plans in 1962.

Through the 1950s, U.S. policy was one of "Massive Retaliation." Future wars would be fought with nuclear weapons, and the purpose of nuclear weapons was to deter Soviet aggression by threatening to kill about 100 million Russians. This threat may have been credible when the United States had a nuclear monopoly, but in the mid-1950s several strategists began to realize that once the Soviets acquired a sizable arsenal themselves, killing Russians would certainly provoke Russians to kill Americans.

So, in a top secret speech delivered on May 5, 1962, in Athens (declassified in 1979), Defense Secretary McNamara told a session of the NATO ministers:

> The United States has come to the conclusion that to the extent feasible, basic military strategy in general nuclear war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations have been regarded in the past. That is to say, our principal military objectives, in the event of nuclear war . . ., should be *the destruction of the enemy's military forces* while attempting to preserve the fabric as well as the integrity of allied society. Specifically, our studies indicate that *a strategy which targets nuclear forces only against cities or a mixture of civil and military targets has serious limitations for the purpose of deterrence and for the conduct of general nuclear war.* (Emphasis added.)

Two months later, McNamara made the same point to a very public audience in Ann Arbor, Michigan. When the air force used the occasion as an excuse to push for a wide variety of new nuclear weapons systems that McNamara opposed, the defense secretary renounced the Athens–Ann Arbor doctrine and started talking about "finite deterrence" and "assured destruction" as the basic requirements of deterrence. But this was a change only in declared policy. The actual policy remained the same—a strategy of counterforce, of aiming the U.S. arsenal at enemy military forces.

McNamara could get away with the obfuscation because in the early 1960s the Soviets had relatively few ICBM sites and airfields, and those were almost totally unprotected. In short, a nuclear arsenal that seemed the right size and character to destroy cities was also adequate to destroy most Soviet military targets.

STARTING IN THE MID-1960s, however, the Soviets embarked on a substantial buildup of ICBMs, and followed our prudent example of encasing these missiles in blast-resistant underground concrete silos. In response, the United States developed multiple warheads (MIRVs), thus multiplying the number of targets that each missile could theoretically destroy, and started making the warheads on those missiles more accurate, so that they could explode sufficiently close to Soviet missile silos to destroy them with high probability.

It was getting hard for defense strategists to talk about 'assured destruction' with a straight face.

In short, the Pentagon developed MIRVs and accurate warheads not to destroy more Soviet cities, but rather—in light of an expanded Soviet arsenal—to maintain the capabilities necessary to execute a counterforce strategy that had been policy for several years. Those arms controllers who believed that we followed an "assured destruction" policy, and who therefore thought our arms buildup constituted overkill, missed the point.

At this stage, it was becoming increasingly difficult to proclaim the policy of MAD with a straight face. The "counterforce" orientation of our hardware was becoming too obvious to maintain that fiction—and the budget requirements for those new weapons were becoming too high. Congress might reject additional nuclear weapons systems as unnecessary if the Defense Department continued to insist that our war plans called for merely retaliating against Soviet cities.

And so, in 1973 and 1974, the new secretary of defense, James Schlesinger, announced that MAD was no longer enough. Soviet missiles were improving in payload and accuracy; our ICBMs were becoming vulnerable as a conse-

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quence. If the Soviets launched a counterforce first strike against the United States, Washington would face a terrible dilemma. Knowing that the Soviets could destroy the United States if the remaining U.S. ICBMs blew up their cities, the United States might not retaliate to a Soviet first strike at all. And if U.S. retaliation is no longer credible, then U.S. nuclear weapons can no longer deter. Schlesinger's conclusion: The United States must start developing limited nuclear options and aiming its weapons at Soviet military targets.

In 1974, reporters proclaimed that Schlesinger's pronouncements meant a new strategy for America. It took Alain Enthoven, an assistant secretary of defense from McNamara's regime (and one of the authors of McNamara's counterforce targeting plans), to correct that impression. In March 1974, Enthoven told Senator Edmund Muskie's arms control subcommittee that:

> assured destruction was a criterion for the adequacy of our strategic retaliatory forces, and not a statement of targeting doctrine. . . . After McNamara's Athens and Ann Arbor speeches, the discussion of nuclear targeting problems lapsed; [but] the subject did not lapse so far as translation of the ideas into specific war plans was concerned. President Kennedy wanted options, flexibility and choice, and his desires were carried out in the design of our posture and plans.

Schlesinger's contribution—codified in a document labeled National Security Decision Memorandum 242—was less a change than a refinement: The technology had developed, since Kennedy's days, to facilitate increasingly limited nuclear options. The President could now have the option to launch warheads by the dozens, rather than by the hundreds, and targeting plans were adjusted accordingly.

When Jimmy Carter took office, it appeared that things might change. In his first six months, Carter considered radical cuts in missile forces; he openly rejected concepts of limited nuclear war; and his secretary of defense, Harold Brown, was already on record as opposing the doctrine of counterforce. Within two years, however, Carter and Brown began coming around—although less enthusiastically than Schlesinger—to the counterforce principle. Brown's last two annual Defense Department posture statements have advocated a "countervailing strategy" one critical component of which is an ability to "respond at a level appropriate to the type and scale of a Soviet attack."

In the fiscal 1981 statement Brown went further, and—in a passage that today's press corps should closely reexamine—said of the notion of "countervailing strategy":

> the name is newer than the strategy. . . . It has never been U.S. policy to limit ourselves to massive counter-city options in retaliation, nor have our plans been so circumscribed. For nearly 20 years, we have explicitly included a range of employment options—against military as well as nonmilitary targets—in our strategic nuclear employment planning. . . . In particular, we have always considered it important, in the event of war, to be able to attack the forces that could do damage to the United States and its allies.

AND SO IT SEEMS THAT the only fundamentally new thing about PD-59 is that, for the first time, a policy of limited nuclear options has been declared as a presidential directive. This is not an insignificant development. Presidential directives consolidate and reinforce certain policy options and reject others. PD-59 thus constitutes a final and formalized victory for those within the national security bureaucracy who have campaigned for counterforce for many years. Those few opponents within the executive branch are now on notice that their views do not count any more.

It also means that several proposed nuclear weapons programs designed to improve counterforce options—the MX, Trident II, and cruise missiles, and dozens of new command-control communication systems and satellites—are closer to becoming realities. Their program managers have acquired a new and powerful legitimacy. Defense officials will surely inform congressional committees that these systems cannot be considered in isolation; that they reflect a new strategic policy directed by the President; and that they are "complementary" or, as the latest fatuous Pentagonese has it, "synergistic" with one another.

In short, Carter's PD-59 will have consequences similar to McNamara's Ann Arbor speech, but with one notable exception: This is a directive signed by a President, not a major policy address by a high administration official. As such, it cannot so easily be revoked, meaning that the weapons designers have basically been given a blank check to develop whatever new sophisticated nuclear systems they can devise. For now that counterforce and limited nuclear options have at last been adopted as declared, and not merely actual, policy, there are no logical limits to the numbers, accuracy, or flexibility of the weapons to be developed or deployed.

Declaring such a policy on a presidential level carries diplomatic dangers as well. Whether or not the Pentagon intends to strike first, declaring a limited-nuclear-war strategy while simultaneously developing such obvious counterforce weapons as the MX missile certainly might be interpreted by allies and adversaries as the harbinger of a first-strike plan.

This impression has three consequences. First, it aggravates peacetime tension between the superpowers; Soviet leaders have certainly known all along what the true U.S. strategy has been, but that it is so loudly and publicly announced must strike the Soviets as a bewildering act of belligerence. Second, it accelerates the arms race. Third, it increases the likelihood of nuclear war. If each side fears the other has first-strike intentions—and if both sides have forces and doctrines that appear to confirm this suspicion—then in a very hot crisis, both sides have positive incentives to strike preemptively. Similarly, accidents and misperceptions are more likely to trigger off nuclear war, as the jittery superpowers are encouraged to adopt a policy of "launch on warning" to avoid losing their nuclear arsenals to a first strike. This may be particularly true for the Soviets, who have nearly 80 percent of their strategic nuclear warheads on top of increasingly vulnerable land-based missiles. (By comparison, not even 25 percent of U.S. warheads are on board ICBMs; the rest are loaded on

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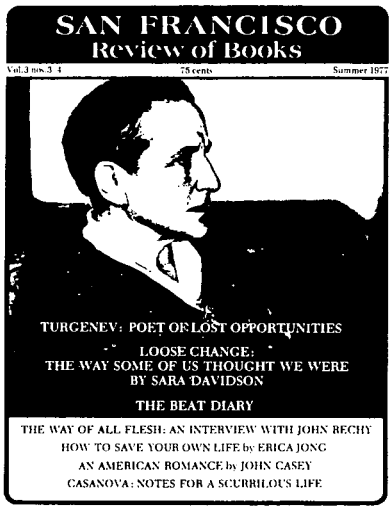
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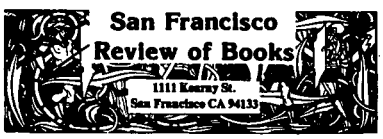

bombers and virtually invulnerable submarines.)

ONE CAN STILL AGREE with the advocacy of limited nuclear options by McNamara and Schlesinger and Brown. If nuclear war does break out, then of course we should have choices other than "surrender or suicide." Once deterrence fails, it makes no sense—it is both immoral and counterproductive—to attack Soviet cities just for the sake of destroying cities. There are many other possible targets: airfields, submarine pens, weapons depots, oilfields, and industries in less populated areas—just to name a few.

But it makes no sense at all to aim at missile silos. For if the Soviets become so desperate as to launch a portion of their missiles against U.S. territory, and if we retaliate with missiles aimed at destroying the remaining Soviet ICBMs, then the Soviets will surely launch their remaining missiles on warning of attack. "Use them or lose them" becomes the guiding rule. Moreover, this second wave of Soviet missiles will probably be aimed to hit factories and other targets of value in or near American cities. In short, in an attempt to limit damage to American society, we may very well help maximize the damage.

Some planners see nuclear war as little more than a diplomatic game of signals and threats.

Another consequence of publicizing this policy at such a high political level concerns how officials—now and in the future—think about nuclear weapons and nuclear war. PD-59 invites future presidents and defense advisers to accept—with remarkable nonchalance—the thesis that nuclear war can be controlled. This may be why Secretary of State Muskie was so outraged at being excluded from the process that set PD-59 into motion and approved it as a national policy. In March 1974, as James Schlesinger was presenting his (nearly identical) ideas on limited options to Muskie's arms control subcommittee, the senator from Maine objected: "On this business of making nuclear war seem more respectable, maybe that troubles me more than any other aspect of this proposal of yours."

Much evidence suggests that once it begins, nuclear war will be very difficult, perhaps close to impossible, to control. In peacetime, both sides test missiles on an east-west trajectory. Missiles launched in wartime, on a north-south flight path, with different (and, more to the point, unpredictably different) gravitational pulls, will certainly be much less accurate than anticipated. Control and communications will probably break down, and in the heat of the moment, emotional responses may well replace reasoned strategies. Things will almost surely get out of hand pretty quickly.

To declare limited nuclear war and counterforce as national public policy is to encourage and legitimize a more sanguine attitude toward nuclear war, and may advance the careers of advisers who see nuclear warfare as little more than a game of signals and threats, different only in degree—not in kind—from everyday diplomatic bargaining. Former U.S. SALT I negotiator Gerard Smith expressed it eloquently in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's July 1979 hearings on SALT II:

> What has happened to the awe we used to feel in watching nuclear explosions from an atoll in the Pacific? Where is the horror we felt in looking at photos of Nagasaki and Hiroshima? All of us, I think, have become calloused to the threat of nuclear war and the effects of nuclear weapons. We seem to be . . . lacking an appreciation of what nuclear war would really be like. We turn to software and computer output, not recognizing the very limited utility of these tools.

President Carter's PD-59 encourages those who believe that with the right budgets and weapons and command-control satellites, a nuclear war can be fought, controlled, and even won in a manner very similar to a war fought with conventional weapons. For the future of arms control, nuclear nonproliferation, Soviet-American relations, and indeed mankind, this consequence may be most damaging of all.

There is a slim chance that the policy declared by PD-59 will limit the damage wrought by nuclear war. There is a greater chance that it will not have much impact on total fatalities, one way or the other; once nuclear war erupts, the slide to all-out conflagration is too slippery. More likely than any projections about casualties is the guess that if the superpowers ever do resort to nuclear war, this particular counterforce policy, with its built-in incentives for preemptive attack, will have played some role in causing the first strike. ❏

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Ronnie and the Bonzo Boys in

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW

In Ronald Reagan we have the ultimate media candidate, a man whose very existence has depended on the image makers for more than forty years. But not every movie has a happy ending.

By Peter Collier

LONG BEFORE THE DELEGATES BEGAN arriving in Detroit, the Republican party's McLuhanites had finished their job. "The whole idea," theorized Reagan image-maker Ken **Reitz**, "is to make the event into a TV production instead of a convention." Given a chance to play Fred Silverman for the week, **Reitz** chose to emphasize the medium rather than the message. He scheduled actor Chad Everett for a coveted prime time slot. In another era it would have gone to a Republican up and comer or to an incumbent in a tight race, but Everett, as **Reitz** pointed out, "has a broad appeal to female America." Wayne Newton was used to give the convention a little Las Vegas glitter. Donny and Marie were there to emphasize that it was good clean glitter, the sort of spunky bravura associated with an Up With People rally. **Reitz** was concerned not only with putting on a good show, however, but with the networks' relentless search for human interest to replace the convention drama destroyed by the reforms of the past decade. He had the idea of using spotlights in the hall to keep cameras from straying onto delegates reading the paper, fanning themselves narcoleptically, or staring into space popeyed with boredom. **Reitz** was aware that media watchers would probably find his plan a little too complete. "But what's important," he said, "is what the viewers at home think. It's like getting a bad review for a film: if it's great box office, who cares?"

The fact that the Republicans were running a controlled convention was hardly news. In 1972 Richard Nixon was renominated in an affair so tightly scripted that exactly ten seconds were allotted for applause after the national anthem, and when Sammy Davis Jr. gave the President an impulsive little hug it seemed a dangerously operatic gesture. The program **Reitz** and his colleagues wanted to put together was more the technician's dream than the totalitarian's. It was choreographed rather than controlled, a natural reflex for people like **Reitz** and his boss, one time recording executive and now California Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb. Curb's ideological identity may come from Orange County, but, more importantly, his professional identity was forged in the studios of Hollywood and the executive suites of Madison Avenue.

By background and disposition, the people around Reagan understand the power of television better than does any other group in American politics. There are those who regard the way television has replaced the political party as the means by which a nominee is made as an academic issue; for the Reagan staff it is a professional one. Reagan's people, more than any other candidate's, appreciated the fact that in a long and dreary primary season, "getting exposure" must dictate policy. (Just after the Iowa caucuses, then campaign manager John Sears was looking for an attention-grabber Reagan could use to revive his sagging candidacy on a scheduled "60 Minutes" appearance; someone suggested that Americans might sit up and take notice if the candidate said that we should have answered the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with a blockade of Cuba—and thus a position was born.) They understood that the most a national convention can do in this day of foregone conclusions is to tease viewers with a little drama; thus they decided to milk the selection of a running mate for all the Nielsen points they could get. Savvy as they are about television, however, they may have underestimated its power, for when Walter Cronkite took them seriously he almost managed to name Gerald Ford as Reagan's candidate for co-President and thereby turn what was supposed to be a political Lawrence Welk show into a rerun of *Advise and Consent*.

The impact of the media on politics has become one of those problems that obsess columnists and civics teachers. Ronald Reagan raises it to the political equivalent of metaphysics. One of the cameras roving over the convention floor in an attempt to create news found Liz Taylor in Nancy Reagan's VIP box. Somewhat changed since her salad days (one pundit noted irreverently that "she looked like she'd been fattened at some Republican Women's feedlot"), she bristled at a question about an actor's qualifications to run for office, replying in essence that the two professions were really quite compatible, requiring basically the same talents. Such comments could make her Senator Warner's Billy Carter, for what Americans fear most about politicians and, to judge from the *National Enquirer*, about actors too, is that the selves we see on camera drain away when the klieg lights go off, leaving the familiar face either changed beyond recognition or, worse yet, lifeless

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and uninteresting, without commitment or charisma.

Other politicians use the media; in the most literal sense, Reagan's very existence as a public personality has always *depended* on the media. Other politicians acquire "media consultants" late in life—people who strengthen voice and delivery, reconstruct a hairline, and, increasingly, suggest what to say. Reagan's image has been manufactured since he first entered the Warner Brothers dream factory forty-three years ago. Much is made of the fact that he was only second lead,

Reagan must wince when spokesmen confide to reporters that he is a 'closet moderate.'

but this lack of a pronounced cinematic personality would help later on. He was present at the creation of television as a medium that not only entertained but shaped an audience's beliefs and ultimately remade what viewers accepted as their world. Raymond Burr was invited personally to defend litigants, not as Perry Mason. (This was sometimes carried to appalling dimensions; once, when Burr gave a speech at the University of Chicago Law School, professors and students crowded around afterwards, asking questions about esoteric legal points.) Vince Edwards got letters in the Ben Casey mailbag begging him to heal the sick and crippled.

Ronald Reagan went from hosting "General Electric Theater" and explaining how technological progress was an important product, to marketing his own ideas about political progress and the dangers of socialism and big government. He was a salesman-showman who took his program on the road to chambers of commerce and industrial plants all over the country, as well as living rooms. Television gave him that characteristic most precious and perishable for a public figure, "authenticity," (something that existed long before it was discovered in the sixties), and made him the first citizen-communicator of the new electronic age.

Reagan's television equivalent of Nixon's defense of Checkers was his taped appearance for Barry Goldwater in 1964, a performance that established him as spear-carrier for that doomed movement and eventually allowed him to rise from the ashes of its disaster. (Reagan's older brother Neil, an advertising executive, was the man who sold Goldwater's staff on televising the speech. "You get this fellow on the air and I'll *guarantee* you he'll be effective," he assured them. "We've tested him out with soap.") Known in Reagan lore as "The Speech," it leaned heavily on that Manichean melodrama that would become the key to his success as a political salesman: "We can preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth, or we can sentence them to take the first step into a thousand years of darkness."

The money men who had midwifed the birth of the southern California New Right were quick to see Reagan's possibilities: a man who could project earnestness, concern, and patriotism so effortlessly that it didn't seem an "act" at all—which was something that could not be said of most conventional politicians. Some observers thought these financiers wanted to make him a sort of "Formosan Candidate" for their movement, getting him to the California governorship in one quick step and taking aim at the presidency. After 1968, however, Reagan practiced the art of staying alive on his own, using radio syndication to keep his silky voice in the public ear and speaking at $10,000 a crack to conventions and forums he knew would be covered on local newscasts. Political cartoonists might portray his face as sutured with age lines and his chins as festooned with dewlaps; Johnny Carson might joke about how he uses Agent Orange in his hair. But Reagan sounds and looks good, and in an era when the TV studio is the only hustings this is what counts.

In what might easily be termed the First Law of Media, however, it seems that the more a candidate is photographed and written about, the less he is known. Four years ago, when Reagan was governor and a serious contender for the nomination, he didn't much interest the press. For the last few months newsmen have become obsessed with finding his "handle." It has been pointed out that he is the sort of guy who calls his wife "Mommy" and loves to come home after a hard day, crawl into his pj's, and watch "Little House on the Prairie"; that he doesn't like the idea of his daughter living with someone who plays in a rock band and is anxious to assure friends that his ballet dancer son isn't queer. But quaint though they may be, these little facts don't add up to "character" and the press knows it. After running a lengthy series of interviews with him earlier this year, the *Los Angeles Times* was forced to subtitle one of the summary pieces (in a phrase that would have made any *Sunset* magazine headline writer proud) "Long in Spotlight, Still Enigmatic."

ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THE HOSTILITY that some reporters feel for Reagan may come from his refusal to help them out. Journalists are probably more dependent than they would like to admit on the candidate to provide signs of his "complexity," to take the lead in writing his "character" for them. Part of the reason the Kennedys got such good coverage, aside from the fact that they had such incredible personal appeal, was their willingness to project a flamboyant sense of self—a sort of gymnastics apparatus on which writers could exercise their talents. With Jack it was a cocky irony that humanized the hortatory quality of Sorensen's speeches. With Bobby it was the "existential" vulnerability that appeared after November 1963. Journalists may not have liked Nixon, but they appreciated the spectacle he offered them: an id utterly off the leash; a persona being invented as it went along, alternately sweaty and smarmy, and always a bit transparent in its dark calculations. Jimmy Carter's media psychodrama has been that of a cold and steely little man, overly righteous in a context calling for flexibility, perhaps too smart for his own good, and certainly one of those people condemned to suffer a reach chronically exceeding their grasp.

Reagan, in contrast to all of these, is a study in rounded edges, someone who from the onset of his career had to smooth over rather than create eccentric features, lest he be forced to abandon his quest for the male lead and have to become a typecast character actor. His self-dramatization is so perfect that it is invisible. If this is acting, it is not the old school "playing a role," but rather the method developed by Stanislavski, "being yourself." He presents the press with a task it doesn't relish: delineating the features of someone who is pretty much what he seems to be.

A child of the piece of history Henry Luce prematurely christened the American Century, Reagan sees himself and the world in terms of the crises and triumphs of the last century. On the occasions when Reagan talks about his past, the trauma of the Great Depression is a central fact. He tends

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to prune and arrange his experiences so that they come out sounding like proof of the old Horatio Alger theorem that holds that a boy coming from a loving but disordered home can make supremely good through his own hard work. (This belief in the efficacy of industriousness is real. Questioned closely about economic growth, on "Bill Moyers's Journal," Reagan sidetracked himself onto a long digression about some backyard inventor who had recently come up with a portable stein handle that could be fitted to beer or soda cans. The disquisition ended in a moral announced with a kind of wonder: "And this man will make himself a million dollars!") When he talks of the larger world, his needle is stuck on World War II, especially Munich, which, along with Pearl Harbor, is his generation's most utilized metaphor. For the last fifteen years, Reagan has been saying that it is 1938 all over again, the United States is in the position of England, and Russia is a slavering beast like Hitler's Nazism, casting a shadow across the map of civilization.

Saying what you mean and meaning what you say are, in American politics as in Alice's Wonderland, often two different things. But Reagan believed, in the sixties (and obviously still does), that U.S. bombers should have altered the topography of Vietnam enough so that it could have been paved and striped into a parking lot; he believed that if you've seen one redwood you've seen them all, and that if there was to be a bloodbath between the state of California and its college students, it might as well be gotten over with. He believes that there can be a massive tax cut along with massive increases in defense spending and, in a mind-boggling discussion of Arthur Laffer's curve, he is willing to show how. (His advisers understandably prefer to leave this as an unproved assertion, the 1980 equivalent of Nixon's secret plan in 1968 to end the war in Vietnam.) Reagan is so infatuated with his beliefs, in fact, that he is constantly collecting reinforcing oddments of knowledge from arcane and evanescent sources for his index cards, "facts" that should be true even if they aren't—that there are greater oil reserves in Alaska than in Saudi Arabia; that there are enough employees simply filling out federal forms at General Motors to populate a good-sized town. Reagan is so garrulous on behalf of his commitments that

Confessions of a Teen-Age Republican

By Glenn Garvin

I MIGHT AS WELL ADMIT IT. I WAS A Teen-Age Republican. Those were strange times, and occasionally I wonder if I imagined it all under the influence of a powerful and exotic drug. Did I really stay up all night making signs for a "spontaneous" rally at a Spiro Agnew campaign appearance? (I recall, or think I recall, since I often have doubts that any of it ever really happened, that Agnew brought the crowd to its feet, roaring, when he shouted, "Republicans sock it to crime!" Subsequently, of course, it became clear that either he or we had sadly misunderstood the term "sock it to.")

My first lesson in what the Nixon gang liked to call "hardball" came early. Harvey Carpenter and I were running against each other for president of the Teen-Age Republican chapter. I had the votes, or so I thought; but on election night, Harvey brought along twenty-three new members who paid their dues on the spot and then cast ballots for Harvey. I attributed my loss to the fact that I was running against an unscrupulous swine, but the further my fledgling political career progressed, the more I came to realize that what Harvey had done was standard operating procedure for Republicans of all ages.

At seventeen I graduated into the big leagues: the Young Republicans. This is where the future leaders of the GOP really learn to file their fangs to a fine point. Chuck Colson, Tom Charles Huston, Ron Ziegler, and Bill Brock all started out as Young Republicans. (And when Donald Segretti began recruiting brigades of dirty tricksters, the YR files were the first place he went for names.) Even though most of the members of the group were ten or twelve years older than I was, they quickly made me vice president in charge of publicity because I was the only one literate enough to write press releases. My exalted new status allowed me to sit in on the club's executive committee meetings, and it was here that I learned the true secret of the Republican party.

The executive committee met once a week. We spent about ten minutes on arcane matters of treasury or organization, and then we got about the real business—plotting our purge of a downstate club so that we could seize control of the state Young Republican apparatus.

I should point out that the New Mexico Young Republicans, at least in those days, had no money to speak of. They certainly had no power, since the Nixon people who ran the Republican party didn't give two hoots about what young anything thought or wanted, not even Young Republicans. And in a state that was predominantly chicano and Democratic, the Young Republicans certainly had no media presence or external status. In short, it was hardly an organization worth plotting to take over. It was hardly an organization worth *belonging* to.

But plot we did. Votes at the state convention were determined by some weird scoring system based on how many new members each club had, how well their meetings were attended, and so forth. We spent two hours a week thinking of ways to pad our membership rolls and design worthless "service projects" that rolled up bonus points. For a change of pace we sipped scotch and howled about how shocked the downstate Roswell club, traditionally the ruler of the state Young Republican establishment, would be when we kicked them out into the street.

GLENN GARVIN, associate editor of INQUIRY, is not now and has only rarely ever been a registered Republican.

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Confessions...

Fortunately, in the middle of all this I went off to college. In those days Young Republicans were seen on the Stanford campus about as often as, say, Trappist monks; and removed from their malign influence I was able to sort things out. I never lived in New Mexico again, and only rarely consorted with Republicans; but I did hear that the Great Purge took place as scheduled, and my old club assumed dominion over all the Young Republicans in New Mexico. After a few months of this, a bitter secessionist movement formed, and a new club was born. Its officers spent all their time plotting a purge of the old club, and a couple of years later they were successful. And so on.

I think it all over from time to time, especially when the Republicans are selecting a presidential candidate, and I know that my time as a Young Republican was more than a bad drug experience. It was a vision, a revelation of the Truth; and I will now generously share this Truth that others may know it without spending two years among a snarling pack of Ron Zieglers.

All Republican thought may be reduced to a single principle: The party exists so that one may purge one's enemies. This principle has a corollary: All those who are not one's intimate associates are one's enemies. The first principle has been apparent to close observers for many years; they have seen Republicans go after students, Vietnamese, civil libertarians, marijuana smokers, Wobblies, black nationalists, newsmen, and countless other subversives. (I should note that Democrats have never been reluctant to engage in a bit of this in their spare moments, either.) The second principle is less well known but even more important in understanding Republican behavior.

It is the second principle, for example, that compels the Jesse Helms wing of the party to rant against ERA and threaten the explusion of infidels like George Bush. It is not that the Helms people care so much about women's rights as an issue—after all, the platform they approved calls for equal rights for women and urges the vigorous enforcement of the existing civil rights statutes toward that end. So the Helms faction has no problem with women's equality, or even with federal intervention to achieve it. That wasn't what was important to them. What was important was punishing the other Republicans who weren't their friends.

Similarly, one of the main reasons the "conservative" wing of the party rejected Howard Baker as a vice presidential candidate was that he helped to give away the Panama Canal. "He really should be read out of the Republican party for what he did on the Panama Canal," snarled Fred (Mr. Phyllis) Schlafly during the convention. But Baker's name came up as a possible running mate for Gerald Ford in 1976, before the canal controversy had started, and these same "conservatives" would have no part of him then, either. I'm using quotation marks around the word "conservative" because ideology has nothing to do with the intraparty spats. Does anyone really believe for a minute, for instance, that the "conservative" Republicans hate the Nobel Bomber Henry Kissinger because he's some kind of liberal appeaser? Kissinger is so widely disliked by Republicans because within the party he's the ultimate outsider: a foreigner, a Jew, and an academic to boot. He's different from everybody else, and he can't join any of the various Republican factions; hence he is an enemy of them all. Likewise with John Connally, ex-Democrat and consummate Texan.

There is also a widespread misconception that these "conservative" Republicans have a monopoly on vitriol and ruthlessness. Not true, not true. Back in the fifties, the Dewey-Eisenhower ("liberal") faction tried constantly to purge the Taft ("conservative") faction. After the Goldwater debacle of 1964, a "moderate" group seized control, and their hitman Ray Bliss mercilessly rooted out Goldwaterites wherever he could find them. (These "moderates" then nominated Richard Nixon, more evidence that ideological labels within the GOP are absolute nonsense.) And even Gerald Ford, generally regarded as too dumb to be vicious, treated the Reagan forces like pariahs after he won the first primaries in 1976. (Ford even hinted that Reagan was stupid; he said the governor has a "penchant for offering simplistic solutions to hideously complex problems." This from a man who didn't know Poland was a Soviet satellite and once horrified a San Antonio crowd by trying to eat a tamale with the cornshuck still on it.) And the same strains of righteousness that seem so comically horrifying in the Helms/Schlafly people also characterize "moderate" John Anderson's rhetoric. In fact, I often think Anderson is the ultimate Republican; he purged the entire party.

The Democratic party, by contrast, has usually avoided the tempting glories of internecine warfare on the theory that the most important thing was to win the election so as to break into the cash register. Each party has been spectacularly successful: the Democrats at spending and the Republicans at bloodletting. This year there is some sign of role reversal, with Teddy Kennedy sulking in his tent and the Republicans prattling about unity. But I am confident the GOP will return to form. After all, the entire upper echelon of the Reagan campaign staff turned on itself in a frenzy of political cannibalism earlier this spring, almost blowing the nomination to George Bush in the process. And recently Paul M. Weyrich, head of the Committee for the Survival of a Free [read Republican] Congress, sniffed that the Reagan-Bush ticket "is the quintessence of what we have been fighting since I got into this business. . . . I'll not work to bring that crew back to town." Now *that's* the Republican party I remember.

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aides sometimes have to step in to terminate news conferences such as the one at the recent gathering of mayors when the candidate was going on about the "tax source" to be used to return billions from Washington to local government.

He must find the insistence of advisers that he scramble for a middle ground somewhat distasteful. He must wince when spokesmen confide to journalists that he has actually been a "closet moderate" all along: They point to his mainstream record as governor, but never say that the episodes of moderation amounted to a frustrating hybrid created by his extreme positions and a stubbornly Democratic legislature. It must sadden Reagan to see Kemp and Roth displaced by Greenspan and Shultz and to have the preppy Trilateralist George Bush selected as vice president in a dumbshow meant to convince a prime time audience that Reagan is not a dangerous extremist—or that if he is and dies in his sleep during the next four years he will be replaced by someone who isn't.

Yet the attempt to make Reagan a centrist does involve some political masterstrokes, and dooms Carter's hope to portray him as the Goldwater of 1980, someone who can be defeated by a single TV ad showing a child pulling the petals off a flower in a countdown that ends in a mushroom cloud. While the Carter forces were dithering over a plank in their platform involving the creation of jobs, Reagan was visiting the South Bronx, where he coopted the traditional Democratic cry for full employment and assailed the administration for creating a recession to solve inflation. Earlier, in a bizarre reprise on history, he ended his acceptance speech by borrowing a New Deal phrase and telling Americans they had a "rendezvous with destiny." This single allusion allowed Reagan to put Carter in the well-deserved role of a contemporary Herbert Hoover, and to offer himself as a modern FDR on the verge of putting together a new coalition that might remake the face of American politics for years to come.

IF CARTER IS TRYING TO STIGMATIZE Reagan as a senescent zealot whose palsied finger might come down on the button, the press has been equally hard on Reagan's supporters. One *Los Angeles Times* writer calls Reagan people "modern Willy Lomans trapped in tracts of townhouses. . . ." Well, there certainly are some homophobes and racists, coupon clippers and Strangelovians at the core of his movement. But there are others sucked centripetally into the periphery—unemployed auto workers and white-collar workers unable to see a way out of their current economic dilemma. They take no pleasure in seeing the population problem solved by starvation in the Third World nor in the increasing gap between the haves and have-nots in America; but they feel impotent to help others and disoriented by the way in which their expectations for their own lives have gone awry. The people who will elect Reagan have been donated to him by liberalism, whose faithful adherents they once considered themselves. Now they see it as dismal and discredited, offering bigger and bigger versions of solutions that have already failed. If the Democratic party has a vision, it is that things shouldn't be expected to improve, although they might get worse more slowly if we can subdue our unruly narcissism (the "malaise" Carter pollster Patrick Caddell discovered in his benighted reading of Christopher Lasch) and work together to transform America into something like a large and truculent Sweden. People come to the Reagan camp not because they are banal or reactionary but because they know that less is less and find no self-flagellatory pleasure in that fact; because they fail to see the theocratic fascism of Khomeini as a just comeuppance for American imperialism; because they persist in the antique desire to pass on a standard of living to their children at least as good as the one they enjoyed.

The dominant image of the 1976 election involved grainy, *cinéma vérité* advertisements showing Jimmy Carter kneeling to caress his peanuts and sift the good red dirt of Georgia through his fingertips. The point was that this was a complex man who found it necessary to reanchor himself in the earth;

The dominant symbol of Election 1980 will be color shots of Ronald Reagan in cowboy duds.

an outsider uncorrupted by the putrescence of Washington; a contemporary Andrew Jackson whose roots were in the stubborn independence and instinctual democracy of the yeoman farmer. The dominant image of the 1980 election will be color shots of Ronald Reagan dressed in cowboy clothes, throwing a saddle over his horse and looking as if he has just dipped a drink from the fountain of youth—with a big sky of his Rancho del Cielo estate behind him.

The federal census of 1890 officially declared the frontier closed. But the American West was always a fantasy, not a fact: a fantasy of freedom and power, a flight from the heavy responsibilities that weighed down other nations. It was always a media creation—an idea superimposed on the grinding reality of nineteenth-century frontier life by the dime novels of the eastern publishing world and later, after the West was gone, on the imaginations of generations of Americans to come by the movies and television. The cowboy of the West has always been the central myth in American life. It has gone through temporary eclipses, as during the Vietnam War; it has always been rehabilitated.

In urging voters to make America Reagan country, the candidate's advisers are tapping a reservoir of fantasy involving the desire for some sort of moral imperative in their lives, as well as for freedom and space. True, much of the open range is now subdivided into condos, and the Indians are tougher, armed with surface-to-air missiles and unwilling to stay on the reservation. But now we should saddle up one last time, Reagan's cowboy image tells us. Whether for a trail ride back to national honor or to a last roundup it is not clear. In any case, the mood of the country resembles the spirit of a Peckinpah western in which the heroes choose to go out in a bloody apocalypse because any other solution is too complex and demeaning. In this regard, Ronald Reagan in a cowboy suit is probably a metaphor whose time has come, and the people who dreamed it up must be granted a kind of genius.

Reagan's media wizards seem to have the answers. But there is one nagging problem. An electorate fed nothing but images is a little like a hyperkinetic child gorging on food additives—low in attention span, irritable and even surly, given to cynicism and despair. The voters bought Jimmy Carter but even as the deal was consummated they sensed he might turn out to be closer to Gomer Pyle than to Andrew Jackson. They will probably buy Ronald Reagan, although they know he can't turn out to be the Lone Ranger. It is little wonder that voters, like viewers, are increasingly turning their sets off altogether. ❑

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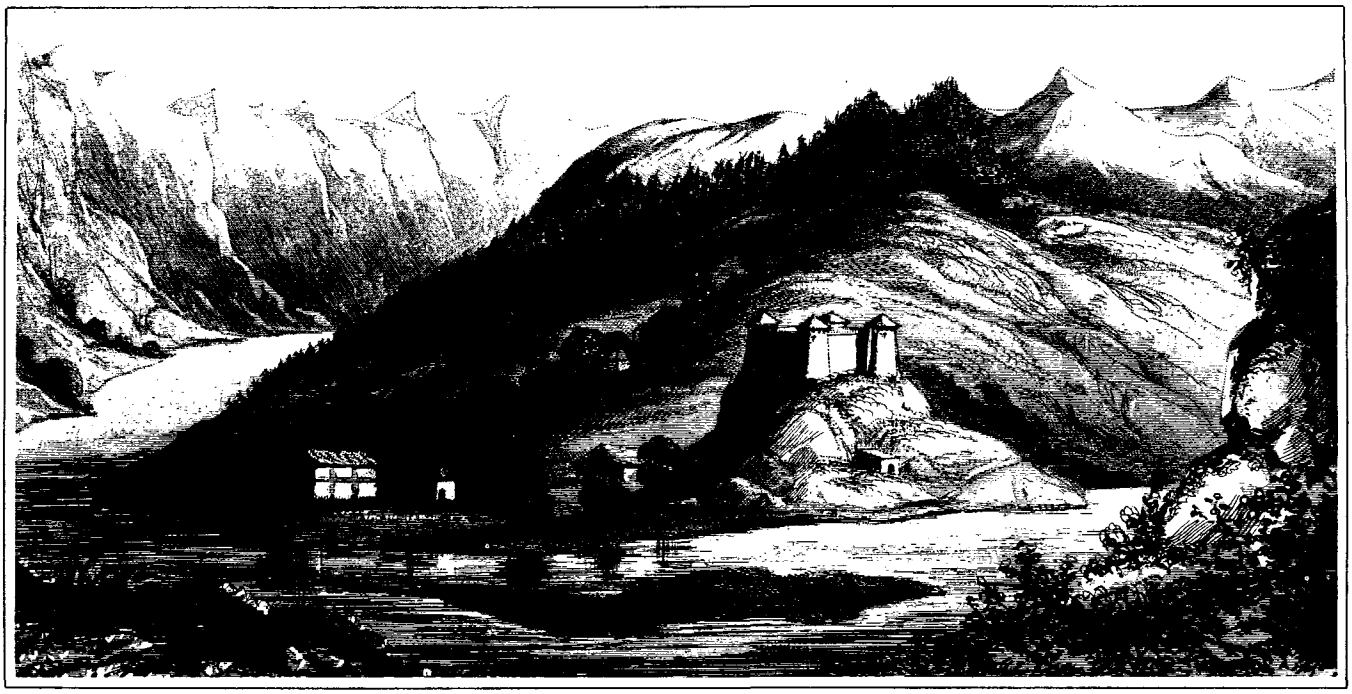
TROUBLE IN SHANGRI-LA



By TORY STEMPF

Despite thirty years of 'reeducation' beatings and 'loving the nation' taxes, the Chinese still haven't won the hearts and minds of the Tibetan people.

WHEN THE FOURteenth dalai lama of Tibet, Tenzin Gyatso, arrived in New York last year, this was taken as a sign that "there is now a lull in Chinese efforts to crush Tibetan culture." Veteran Tibet- and China-watchers and the U.S. press, particularly the *New York Times*, had long been proclaiming Tibet's recovery from the more pernicious effects of early Chinese Communism. This relaxation of control just proves, as national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski loves to point out, that the Chinese Communists are not as threatening to Western democratic values as are the perfidious Soviets.

Tenzin Gyatso dealt this notion a lethal blow. "My people are not at all happy," he said. "Very little constructive change has happened. Tibet is still a vast prison." Mounting evidence corroborates the dalai lama's contention that this Tibetan "rebirth" is really a myth, fashioned less out of concern for the Tibetan people than to serve the propaganda needs of China. Furthermore, it is being promoted with American complicity, and, although politically expedient, it will only make the securing of justice and human rights in Tibet more difficult.

China's interests in Tibet have loomed large ever since the 1700s, when the Manchu emperors first stationed an *amban,* or political adviser, in Lhasa, the capital, to represent the wishes of the Peking court. Even during the Nationalist period of 1911–49, when Tibet was functioning as a sovereign state, Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang government persisted in the charade that Tibet was a province of China, and "representatives" were placed in the national congress to serve as proxies for the region. Today, Peking calls those years of Tibetan autonomy a temporary hiatus in a political domination going back to Genghis Khan in the 1200s. By Chinese reckoning the invasion in October 1950 merely corrected a historical aberration—in addition to "liberating" Tibet "from imperialist aggression" and restoring human rights to a people who had been deprived of them for centuries by an outmoded and repressive feudal theocracy. But in the process of being freed, Tibet also became an imprisoned society shut away from the rest of the world, only an occasional rumor of "unrest" rippling an otherwise quiet spot on the map of Asia. Anything heard about

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Tibet was only what Peking wanted told.

Perhaps this is why the revolt in Lhasa in 1959, sparked by 30,000 "liberated," pitchfork-wielding peasants, caught everyone by surprise. The throng massed before the summer home of Tenzin Gyatso, then twenty-four years old, to prevent him from being taken by the Chinese authorities. (Within Tibetan Buddhism the dalai lama is the temporal and spiritual leader, a divine reincarnation of the ancestor of the Tibetan people.) The Chinese, remarkably, called the ensuing reprisals "democratic reforms," but in reality, they involved a systematic eradication of the form of Buddhism central to Tibetan culture. The dalai lama fled to India in disguise, with 100,000 followers. His appeals to the United Nations for a plebiscite brought only rebukes and harsh warnings from the Chinese that "no interference will be tolerated." Deep secrecy had by then obscured Tibet, concealing the Cultural Revolution that lasted into the late 1960s: The Red Guards were wiping out all vestiges of the "four olds"—old thoughts, old habits, old culture, old customs—that remained from the days of the "reactionary dalai clique." Indirect evidence suggests that 90,000 Tibetans died or disappeared during this time.

The purge of the Gang of Four in 1976 began a new era of "national unity and return to tranquility" in China that swept into Tibet. In 1977, Tenzin Gyatso was formally invited to return to his homeland by the Tibetan regime, if only he would agree to "embrace the Socialist Motherland and stand on the side of the people." Chinese efforts to woo him are intensifying, but these efforts also make it clear that dismal conditions have been common throughout the region for at least a decade.

This abrupt change is not the product of altruism so much as a deftly played Tibet card with enormous implications for China both domestically and internationally. Deng Xiaoping's evolving rapprochement with the West, if successful, will catapult China into the technological age. Because China is going to need internal peace and cohesion while it modernizes, enormous efforts have been made to pull together all the artistic, intellectual, scientific, and ethnic elements of Chinese society into a united domestic front—a One China. Since Tibet comprises nearly one-fourth of China's land area and has been for thirty years the most obstreperous of its non-Chinese colonies, Tibet's commitment to this unification is both crucial and hard to ensure. That Peking was going to shift to a more diplomatic approach in Tibet was signaled by the presence of a Tibetan representative at the 1978 Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the first national-planning parliament convened by the Communists since 1964. To Tenzin Tethong, the dalai lama's man in New York, Tibetan participation in the conference was "a very positive sign . . . that China intends to take a more practical approach to the Tibetan question."

The dalai lama is the linchpin of this "practical approach." His exile to India may once have been to China's advantage, but the Tibetan people neither forgot nor abandoned him, which Peking had hoped for. And Peking has found no one to replace him; thus, ironically, the Chinese are now courting the one man capable of unifying Tibetan nationalist sentiment against them. The risk is high, but evidently the Chinese feel that to lure him home at such a sensitive time and embrace him as Tibet's legitimate leader would bring some measure of peace to their troubled domain—and he is reportedly willing to come if the right terms can be arranged with China.

> Our complicity in the myth of Tibetan rebirth will only make securing human rights in Tibet more difficult.

RECENT EVENTS MAY clarify the nature of that decision. A five-man delegation representing the dalai lama had been touring Tibet for nearly three months when, on July 31, they were suddenly and prematurely asked to leave the country. The group was mobbed by a crowd of 2000 when speakers said things like, "May the dalai lama's aims and hopes be achieved," and the deputy chairman of Tibet's government later accused the delegation of "surreptitiously advocating Tibetan independence." Adhering to national priorities, however, the newly appointed party leader in Tibet, who has been presiding over recent moves toward liberalization, suggested that the group had in fact exceeded its mandate from the dalai lama and insisted their expulsion would not affect the possibility of the dalai lama's return.

The ever-shifting balance of power in Asia is encouraging China to stabilize Tibet quickly, since Tibet stands like a colossus on the edge of a subcontinent; the other two significant Asian powers, the Soviet Union and India, are also competing, and the dalai lama is the prize in this geopolitical game. For instance, in June 1979, when Peking seemed likely to succeed in striking a new alliance with him, Moscow concocted the scheme of asking the dalai lama to address the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace at Ulan Bator, Mongolia—evidently to drive a wedge not only between China and the dalai lama, but into any possible resumption of a New Delhi–Peking dialogue that could subvert Soviet-Indian détente. That the dalai lama did not go to Peking, but visited Moscow and Mongolia instead, infuriated the Chinese. According to a New China News Agency report, "The Soviet Union's courting of Buddhism is closely related to its schemes to form a chain of pro-Soviet or anti-Chinese governments to encircle China."

Twenty-five years ago few were predicting an eventual Sino-American alliance. Cold War politics in the 1950s demanded an American "response" to Communist Chinese aggression in Tibet, and the matter was turned over to the CIA. According to the English journalist Chris Mullin, American involvement with the Tibetan resistance movement began in 1957, when the dalai lama's elder brother, Gyalo Thondup, arranged for six Khampa Tibetans to receive CIA training in the use of modern arms and radio equipment. They were then to be parachuted back into Tibet to form what he hoped would be the nucleus of a guerrilla movement.

When the dalai lama was fleeing toward India in 1959, and squadrons of Chinese fighter planes were combing the Himalayan foothills for him, his small party was in constant radio contact with CIA surveillance. As it turns out, they had been joined by the surviving member of that original group of six CIA-trained infiltrators. Commenting on the reticence of Tibetans to talk about this collaboration, the dalai lama said: "This kind of report is extremely dangerous because it implies that the resistance in Tibet was initiated by outsiders. This

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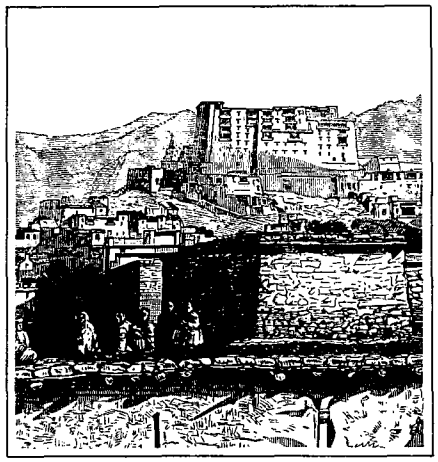
was not so. I want to emphasize that the whole policy was initiated by Tibet, whether we had CIA/United States help or not. Tibetan determination was there from the start."

In 1960 an ultrasecret program for Tibetan guerrillas began at Camp Hale, in Colorado Springs; by 1962, 170 Khampas had been trained in the mountains near Leadville. When, in 1960, the resistance in eastern Tibet was petering out, a new operation was founded in the Mustang Valley of western Nepal. From there an army of several thousand was to stage quick raids into western Tibet. The Nepalese government wasn't informed of this guerrilla base until the Chinese told them about it in 1962. Raids from this base continued for eight more years—supplied with material by the CIA until 1969. When CIA ardor cooled, the research and analysis wing of Indian intelligence took the project on, building a Tibetan regiment that India vowed would be "used to liberate Tibet." In 1971, when the United States moved even closer to China, these guerrillas were suddenly abandoned.

Although the United States had supported Tibetan guerrilla warfare and backed United Nations resolutions in 1959, 1961, and 1965 that called "for respect for the fundamental rights of the Tibetan people," American respect never went so far as to recognize Tibetan independence from China. With Nixon's trip to Peking in 1972, the U.S. government's sympathies evaporated altogether. This turnabout was foreshadowed the year before, when the State Department first squelched the release of a U.S. Information Agency film about Tibet, *Man from a Missing Land,* as "not being conducive to a positive resolution" of pending negotiations with Peking, and then barred the dalai lama from entering this country lest the Chinese interpret his presence as an American endorsement of Tibetan autonomy. American opinion and policy have fallen happy victims to Chinese propaganda that uses Tibet to help shore up what is rapidly becoming a veiled military alliance.

That the dalai lama finally received a tourist visa in 1979 did not mean that the Carter administration had decided to take up the Tibetan cause. What it did mean was that Peking had relented a bit in its campaign to isolate the dalai lama and gave tacit consent to the visit; Deng Xiaoping knows a staunch ally when he sees one.

Despite the effusiveness in some quarters of the U.S. press, neither did it mean that China was becoming more sensitive to the aspirations of the Tibetans. The dalai lama may have had former south Asian correspondent Neville Maxwell in mind when he remarked of this reportorial snow job: "Some . . . have always been uncritical admirers of the 'Chinese Revolution.' They make their living out of reporting firsthand news from China and commenting on it. How can they be expected to say anything that would conceivably jeopardize their chances of obtaining more Chinese visas in the future?"



China is vying with the Soviet Union and India for mastery in south Asia, and the dalai lama is the prize.

Maxwell's 1976 series in the *New York Times,* and the 1979 articles by Fox Butterfield and Audrey Topping in the same newspaper, are typical of the panegyrics to China's miraculous achievements in Tibet. A few examples:

Under the old Lamaist theocracy . . . there were no roads, no industry, not to mention no schools or medical care outside the monastery. . . . The bulk of the population were impoverished serfs.

Now the Tibetan Autonomous Region . . . has 200 factories, 10,000 miles of roads and 6,300 schools. Television was introduced to Lhasa this spring, along with a telephone service that reaches New York.

—*Fox Butterfield*

The Communists' introduction of secular education incurred the wrathful opposition of the politically powerful monasteries and also of the nobility, because of the aggressive egalitarianism with which the new schools were run. The Communists subsidized the children of the poor, which comprised the vast majority of the population, providing not only teaching and all its needs free, but also cash, food and clothing to help the children's families.

—*Neville Maxwell*

There are industries in the new Lhasa, and the department stores are stocked with the same variety of sensible and enjoyable goods as seem to be found in every corner of China.

—*Neville Maxwell*

Such analyses are made at the expense of journalistic integrity. When one considers the extent of China's meddling today in Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan, it becomes obvious whose press release Brzezinski was reading when he observed that "China is a factor for stability in Asia and contributes to great restraint by all parties." Ironically, these journalists blunt the dalai lama's case against Chinese imperialism by citing his own old society as a form of barbarism that was removed only by China's merciful intervention. And how can they justify bringing him back if the old order was so dreadful?

But propaganda can be a two-edged sword; in order to appear liberal a regime must enact a few liberal policies, and here China's efforts have run into difficulties. Take travel restrictions, for instance. Until 1979 no Tibetan could leave the country, nor any exile return to it. Now, carefully selected Tibetans may visit relatives abroad—if they have other family members in Tibet to guarantee their return—and Tibetan refugees may rejoin their familes in Tibet. In the past, Tibetans sympathetic to the Chinese regime may have encountered Westerners uninformed about Tibetan life, but now they must deal with visitors who are neither dependent upon a Chinese version of history, nor at the mercy of Chinese-appointed interpreters who can screen dialogue and deflect inquiries as they see fit. The Tibetan "resurrection," some Tibetan youths told a visitor, is a fiction concocted "only for the benefit of the Tibetan visitors and foreign press." They also tell of massive deception and manipulation by the Chinese at all levels of Tibetan life today. A few anecdotes told by Tibetan émigrés:

—"During my stay in Lhasa I had the impression that the Tibetans were leading quite happy lives; although they did not wear good clothes they were dancing in the evenings and picknicking on Sundays. Later when I talked with these people they said they face many difficulties and that they danced and drank just to forget their miseries even if it was just for a day. They said these liberties were allowed only this year [1979]."

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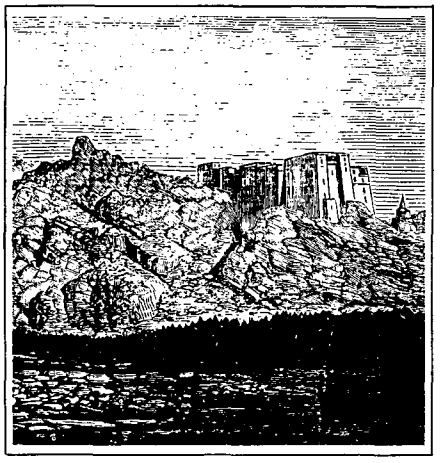
—"In 1976, a few days before the Nepalese king's visit to our school, we were told to wear Tibetan dress, and the girls were told to wear traditional Tibetan hairstyles. But the girls had already cut their hair short in Chinese style, so they were made to wear long braided wigs made out of paper. But when the king came it began to rain, and the wigs came apart, causing much embarrassment." (Jampa Tsultrim, a Tibetan now living in Nepal)

—"Every time I asked the monk something, he answered looking at the Chinese. I said to the Chinese: 'The monk keeps looking at you instead of answering me directly. He seems very scared of you, doesn't he?' The Chinese said: 'Oh no. He can say anything he likes.' But whatever he said sounded like a prepared speech and was never a direct answer to my questions." (Kunsung Choedon, a young Tibetan woman living in Dharamsala, India)

—"I asked to see some relatives of refugees I knew. On returning to Shigatse they had five of these people waiting for me. Throughout my stay in Tibet I never saw anyone like those five. They were all wearing expensive, elaborate clothes—brocades and double-silk shirts, etc. And they all had big titles like secretaries and accountants in Chinese offices. But their hands were not like those of accountants or clerks. They were full of scars and swollen, with knobby fingers." (Tsultrim Tersey, a Tibetan living in Switzerland)

The reforms announced this summer are addressed to the aspects of life in Tibet that are in most marked contrast to the way things were before the dalai lama's exit. Proposed changes will decentralize control of agriculture and revive or strengthen Tibetan religious and cultural practices.

Before 1950 the Tibetans were poor and comparatively free; today they are oppressed—and still poor. This is the extent to which Tibet has changed, according to Tenzin Tethong, head of the Office of Tibet in New York City. It's indeed an accurate summation of the latest eyewitness Tibetan accounts. For example, until 1959 Tibet had never experienced a famine. Now, even with increased productivity, the payment by the peasants of a "loving the nation" tax, a "surplus grain sales" tax, and a "war preparation" tax does not leave enough grain with which to purchase the strictly rationed butter, meat, and salt that had been given to each family by the landowners under the old order. And whereas before, the taxed crops were stored in the monasteries for use by the citizenry in time of drought, now most of the surplus feeds the 200,000 to 300,000 Chinese troops garrisoned throughout the country to preserve order, and the rest is shipped off to China.



'All the people they showed me had big titles. But their hands were swollen and scarred, and had knobby fingers.'

*MAINTAINING CON*trol is not solely a military matter. Peking is diluting Tibetan national identity by orchestrating a massive influx of Chinese settlers, much in the same fashion as Israel is attempting to absorb the West Bank by resettling its people in numerous Elon Morehs. Chinese are everywhere, immigrating now at the rate of about 1,000 per year. Analysts estimate there are now over 120,000 Han Chinese—not counting Chinese troops—living among a Tibetan population of 1.7 million. The Nepalese consul in Lhasa tells visitors that this city, a town of no more than 12,000 before 1959, has now swelled to perhaps 120,000. Seventy percent of them are Hans—about the same percentage as in a typical Tibetan factory, the highest levels of the government, and the Communist party hierarchy. (The Chinese like to boast that of the government cadres 65 percent are Tibetans, but evidently this is true of leadership only at the commune level.) Immigration was slowing until the past year, when Peking began a major transfer of thousands of Chinese officials and workers to the region. This surge was Peking's way of assuring its control of Tibet below the surface while it was conspicuously relaxing some of the restraints on religious practices. Since there were virtually no monks left anyway, the average citizen would find it very difficult to be a fully observant Buddhist regardless of how permissive the regime.

Tibetans are second-class citizens; if they are government employees or teachers they are punished for praying in public. Monks who try to teach the Buddhist *dharma* to the people are denied their food-ration coupons; children are forbidden to pray in school. The traditional Buddhist holidays like Losar, the Tibetan new year, are not observed publicly, and to be caught carrying a portrait of the dalai lama could mean being subjected to a *thabzing*, a "struggle-session" of beatings and "reeducation" from which thousands have died. The much-publicized restoration of many of the great Buddhist shrines in Tibet has in fact meant putting fake statues in place of the sacred relics that were destroyed or, if valuable, sent to China in the 1960s.

The monolithic Buddhism that long permeated and virtually defined Tibetan existence became moribund. In a society where once the religious life attracted one Tibetan male in four, in twenty years no young men had entered the priesthood; the ecclesiastical community of 150,000 monks was reduced to 2,000. But personal faith in *dharma* itself—the cosmic order that includes all natural and moral principles applicable to all beings and things—is very much alive. Thanks to a more lax Chinese attitude, and uncertainty as to how much moderation is too much, religion seems to be going through a mini-revival—not only in the privacy of the home. Some say it is flourishing even among the young, who have grown up under the occupation and who Peking likes to say have fully absorbed communist doctrine. When some major shrines in Lhasa were reopened this past year, the disconcerted Chinese saw pilgrims coming from all over Tibet to kneel before the sacred relics, hang prayer flags in the trees, and sing songs not only to the dalai lama but to Tibetan independence. There is little doubt that the new tolerance for some religious expression also rekindled the spirit of na-

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tionalism that Peking had hoped would slowly die. But the dalai lama had forewarned them that, in Tibet at any rate, "politics and religion are one and the same."

Last summer the Tibetan government invited eighteen members of the dalai lama's organization in Dharamsala, India, to visit Lhasa and view the "progress." Then, abruptly, the eighteen were turned away at the border when they refused to have "China" noted as place of birth in their passports. Clearly Tibetan exiles know that the real issue is not, as the Chinese would have everyone believe, religious freedoms or economic progress, nor is it the return of the dalai lama or even the repatriation of the 100,000 refugees living abroad.

The real issue, as the dalai lama has remarked, is national self-determination, "the feelings and welfare of the Tibetans still living in Tibet. Why," he asked, "should an alien rule be forced upon them? Why shouldn't they have the choice of holding their own beliefs, traditions, culture, and identity?" These challenges go to the very crux of the matter—that China, its alleged improvement of Tibet notwithstanding, doesn't legally belong there. The International Commission of Jurists said it back in 1960: "Tibet demonstrated from 1912 to 1950 the conditions of statehood as generally accepted under international law," and therefore "the events in Tibet . . . are in breach of what jurists everywhere would understand by the Rule of Law in its most elemental meaning. . . ."

In light of all this, it's understandable that revolt and resistance have been the Tibetan response to China's tales of Shangri-la. The first major uprising started when Chinese troops began confiscating monastery property in the eastern provinces of A-mdo and Kham in 1956, and this reaction spread across Tibet, precipitating the Lhasa revolt in 1959 and the dalai lama's escape to India. The panchen lama, an incarnate lama equal in spiritual rank to the dalai lama but having no secular powers, became Tibet's spiritual leader. In 1964 he was deposed after he led a rebellion at Tashi Lumpo monastery, near Shigatse, and spoke out on behalf of the dalai lama.

Uprisings continued. In 1970 the Youth Rebellion in Lhasa was quashed only after eight leaders of the underground youth movement were publicly executed. The occasional chatter of machine-gun fire is still reported along the convoy routes crisscrossing the high plateau, and Chinese patrols are sometimes fired upon. A 45-year-old man who fought the Chinese in 1959 and was just released from prison told a reporter that armed resistance was continuing, but becoming more and more difficult. "Chinese military retaliation against raids on military convoys is swift and hard."

What may be more widespread is a form of passive resistance that concentrates not so much on violent confrontation as on quietly defying Chinese authority and undermining proscriptions against, say, spreading of the *dharma* by meeting secretly in small groups in homes at night to sing patriotic songs and say prayers to the dalai lama. Even a Tibetan form of the "democracy wall" apparently came into existence as a result of some mysterious posters hung during Losar last year.

> China had hoped some measure of tolerance toward religion would quiet unrest, but the real issue is independence.

IT'S NOT CLEAR TO WHAT extent the dalai lama's organization in Dharamsala is supporting whatever remains of a cohesive resistance movement. The dalai lama has admitted that by 1959 he knew of the CIA's involvement and evidently condoned it. As for the Taiwanese and Indian efforts, "They have my sympathy," he said. But as a pacifist he has had to walk a thin line between sanctioning the cause of his people and obeying his religious principles. Although his brother keeps the old CIA connection alive, it is reasonable to expect that the only support being extended to the Tibetans living in Tibet these days is of the moral sort, communicated by spies of his Dharamsala government. If any equipment or money is being smuggled into Tibet from Indian, Taiwanese, or perhaps even Soviet sources, the amount is unknown. Evidently Tibetan nationalist sentiment is flourishing without such outside support, and whether nationalistic feelings will intensify seems to be up to the Chinese themselves.

China's policies in Tibet for the last thirty years, which sought to win over the Tibetan people, have so far been a dismal failure. The alleged advances between 1976 and 1978 were largely illusory, and Peking has been forced to grant more substantive concessions to appease a tenacious Buddhist faith. The Chinese hoped some measure of tolerance toward religion would quiet unrest without reviving nationalism, but they were wrong. No liberalization program short of independence will allay the nationalist fervor in Tibet.

Tenzin Tethong discussed the question of the future of Tibet: "We just do not know," he conceded, shrugging his shoulders. "It's impossible to trust the Chinese. I think some more relaxation concerning Buddhist practices is forthcoming, but [the Chinese] could revert back to the old ways if at any time they begin to feel the Tibetans are taking advantage of them. Things are a little better, but the ups and downs of Deng Xiaoping's career itself show how unstable the Chinese can be." Perhaps, he dared hope, China is looking for a way to back out of Tibet altogether. But it must be "graceful, because above all else the Chinese do not want to lose face."

The man who could spare the Chinese that misfortune is the dalai lama. To this point China hasn't been unduly disturbed by his criticism of its Tibetan policies, knowing full well that world opinion is simply too intrigued by the prospect of a "new" China to pay much attention to a people decrying what they see as a takeover. But China's loud displeasure at his Russian visit last summer reflected its new sensitivity to his power among the Tibetan people, and if a feeling of patriotism is indeed awakening, China obviously believes that only Tenzin Gyatso, safely ensconced back in Lhasa, could turn its energy to Peking's advantage.

This return isn't likely, not as long as Tibet remains a vast prison. (Of the reports of "happy Tibetans," the dalai lama scoffed, "We do not have a single independent Tibetan to support these claims.") The one condition under which the dalai lama would consent to return to Tibet—the very condition China cannot accept—is his demand, reiterated since 1965, for a United Nations–supervised plebiscite in Tibet "to determine whether the people are truly happy." How else to atone for these thirty years of violations of the Genocide Convention of 1948 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

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LAYING WASTE: The Poisoning of America by Toxic Chemicals, by Michael Brown. Pantheon Books, 335 pp., $11.95.

Contaminating our rights

GERRY SAUER

IN 1608, IN AN ENGLISH county court, William Aldred brought suit against his neighbor Thomas Benton for building a pigsty that raised a stench in Aldred's house. Benton attempted to defend himself with the argument that "the building of the house for hogs was necessary for the sustenance of man: and one ought not to have so delicate a nose, that he cannot bear the smell of hogs . . . " In those days, however, to foul one's neighbor's air or water was to violate his property rights. The judge rejected Benton's argument and ruled on behalf of Aldred.

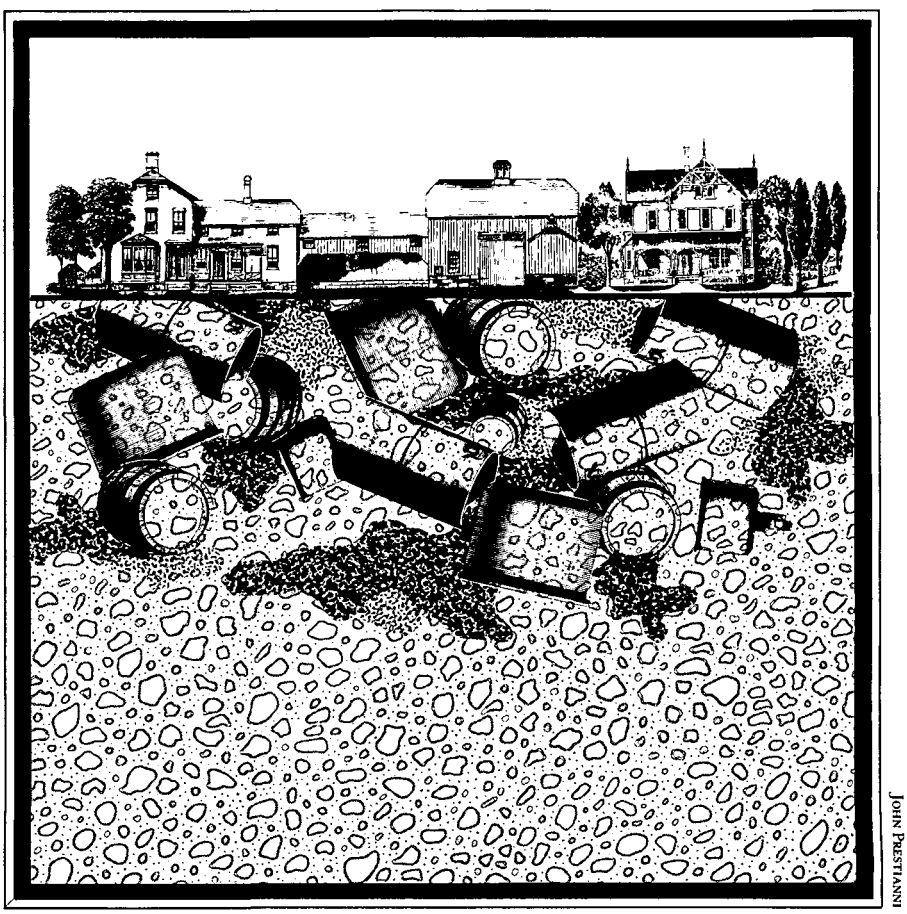
In 1705, in ruling on another suit for nuisance, an English judge by the name of Holt reaffirmed the strict property view of environmental rights. A neighbor's privy had fallen into disrepair, with rather disgusting consequences for the plaintiff, whose house was only a few feet away. In analyzing the case Holt put forward timeless, common-sense principles: "Every man must so use his own as not to damnify another." And in particular, "every man . . . must keep in [his] filth . . . that it may not flow in upon . . . his neighbor." The privy owner was ordered to take care of the problem.

With many such strong precedents in early Anglo-American law, one might expect to find the potential nuisances of modern technology reined in by vigorous and swift legal actions. One could imagine, for instance, industrialists being held in check by a populace that knew its basic rights as well as it knew the Pledge of Allegiance, assisted by enterprising lawyers and scientists in hot pursuit of court-awarded fees. Instead, during the nineteenth century, environmental law was thrown off such a path, finally to wind up in ditches the likes of the Love Canal.

First, for dubious "public interest" reasons, federal and state law declared that legal actions against widespread "public nuisances" could be brought only by government officials. Next, public works agencies were exempted from strict liability. Gradually, the exemptions were extended to private corporations working on legislatively authorized projects. Finally, with the rise of the legal doctrine of negligence, the protective bulwark of strict property rights in the environment collapsed almost entirely. No longer could people point to the plain facts in order to get a legal remedy. Instead they had to prove that companies had not been sufficiently careful. Couple this heavy burden of proof with bureaucratic court delays and incomplete compensation, and you have all the ingredients for legal passivity and a rampant buildup in pollution of all types.

Caught between an irate public and myopic businessmen, politicians have been scrambling ever since to devise regulatory "fixes" that would placate both sides. In *Laying Waste* Michael Brown presents considerable evidence of their failure. The book is replete with examples of homeowners who became suspicious about toxic chemicals; they got nowhere with the local, state, and federal regulators supposedly protecting them, and were polluted and poisoned as a result.

The best chapters of the book are the early ones dealing with Brown's experi-



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ences uncovering the toxicity of the pollution emanating from the Love Canal, in Niagara Falls, New York. No matter what one finally thinks of the book, Brown's accomplishments as a hometown reporter for the *Niagara Gazette* have been impressive. His persistent investigation refreshingly demonstrates that a determined individual can still make headway against a local oligarchy of political and corporate officials.

The city fathers subsidized the chemical industry by looking the other way at its pollution.

Brown's curiosity about toxic chemicals was first piqued in 1977 at a hearing on a new waste disposal facility. There he encountered a young woman who was arguing against the new facility; she charged an earlier one at the Love Canal had created great problems in her neighborhood. Brown learned that the woman's yard, "once featured in a local newspaper for its beauty," had been invaded by a subsurface chemical ooze. Several of her trees and shrubs had withered and died. Her parents, three houses down, had complained to the city as early as 1959 about the black sludge that was seeping through their basement walls and causing the whole house to smell like a chemical plant.

Years earlier the city fathers had adopted a policy of subsidizing the growth of the local chemical industry by looking the other way on much of its pollution. The official attitude was that the chemical invasions were only "nuisances," not serious dangers. Ordinary citizens, whether they worked in the industry or not, just had to put up with and get used to malodorous fumes.

But when it came to the Love Canal, city officials had particular reasons for playing down the pollution. First of all it was coming from city property. The disposal site had belonged to the Board of Education since 1953, when the area was purchased from the Hooker Chemical Company for a dollar. Secondly, city officials had taken several steps that made the site more dangerous. As Brown tells it, they completed a public school eighty feet from the canal's midsection even though during construction a waste pit had been uncovered that gave off strong chemical odors. Thirdly, the city had subdivided the site and sold land on the periphery of the canal for residential development. In putting in roads on the site, the city dug into the "cap" of dirt and clay that Hooker had put over the dump. It also allowed some of the surface to be hauled away for landfill elsewhere. Furthermore, at the time of Brown's investigation, the city was wooing Hooker to locate its headquarters in downtown Niagara Falls. Adverse publicity about the canal could have blown the deal.

HOOKER, FOR ITS PART, had dumped thousands of tons of chemical residues at the site from the late 1930s until the 1953 sale. At the time, the area was largely rural, but even then there was a small cluster of homes within feet of the canal. "Odors similar to those of industrial districts wafted into the adjacent windows, accompanied by gusts of fly ash." Of course nothing was done. One wonders how William Aldred and Judge Holt would have reacted, given just high-school knowledge of biology and chemistry.

According to several sources, Hooker apparently misled the city about the toxicity of the chemicals when it deeded the site to the Board of Education. Brown tells us that the deed left "the impression that the wastes . . . would be a hazard only if physically touched or swallowed." In fact, the site contained some extremely toxic pesticide and herbicide residues (C-56 and dioxin) as well as large quantities of other substances that can impair health at low concentrations (for instance, PCBs and benzene).

Many of these chemicals later turned up in the surrounding residences. The air in the basement that was invaded by the black sludge was determined to have chemical concentrations thousands of times those considered safe for extended breathing. Significantly higher rates of liver and chromosomal damage and reproductive problems have been found among people in the immediate area.

Although some people in Niagara Falls knew that chemicals were leaking from dump sites and suspected they were threatening people's health, Brown's contribution was to pull together the evidence and break the news in such a way that government officials could no longer play down the problems. Even so, it has taken them months and years to react.

There remains, however, considerable inconsistency between Brown's blanket condemnation of Hooker's dump site design and congressional testimony on the matter. Brown states, "The Love Canal was simply unfit to be a container for hazardous substances, even by the standards of the day. . . ." On the other hand, the American Institute of Chemical Engineers testified at a Senate hearing that the design would have met even the federal guidelines of the 1976 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

The sides and bottom of the canal site were lined with clay; chemicals have not migrated out through the impermeable lower portion of the dump. What apparently happened was that rainfall filtered through the surface and then became contained in the canal. With insufficient evaporation and drainage, the water in the dump eventually overflowed near the top, carrying large amounts of toxic chemicals into the surrounding groundwater. Still at issue is whether Hooker's original dirt and clay cap would have warded off the rainfall problem had the cap not been dug into after the Board of Education took over the property.

Brown also fails to mention that in 1957 Hooker did warn repeatedly that there were dangerous chemicals buried four feet below the surface; the company maintained that there had been a mutual understanding in 1953 that the site should not be excavated or subdivided for development, but should be used only for some surface activity. The warnings were given by a company lawyer at Board of Education meetings, and were reported in two November 1957 articles in the *Niagara Gazette*. Since publication of the book, Brown has commented that the warnings show that the company knew in 1953 that the site was unsafe for a school. Yet it had stated the site was desirable for this purpose.

DID HOOKER ENVISION THE school being built off to the side, with the top of the dump remaining unexcavated and used only for some surface activity? If so, we may find out about it in the *Wall Street Journal*, which has come to the chemical industry's defense. In any event Hooker seems to have been silent about the chemical time bomb from 1957 on. Brown points

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out in *Laying Waste* that it issued no further warnings in 1958 when it was informed that three children were burned by exposed residue. Meanwhile the company started disposing of its wastes elsewhere around Niagara Falls—at its Hyde Park landfill and "S" and "N" plant areas. Each of these dumps has leaked large amounts of highly toxic chemicals into the nearby watershed. Brown discovered that "S" and "N" were across the road from the city's waterworks and that "S" was leaking pesticides into the plant's intake pipe.

Through most of the middle of the book, Brown persists in offering anecdote after anecdote, example after example, until one starts wondering whether the same story isn't being presented over and over, merely with different chemicals and in different states. A strong temptation arises to skip large sections and see what might be waiting at the end. This is not to downplay the human tragedy that is presented, but much of the book really belongs in an appendix.

Missing is much in the way of broader historical or policy analysis that could provide greater perspective on the problems raised and a more solid basis for new policy developments. The lack of analysis would be tolerable were it not for the fact that the book is clearly intended to have a direct and major policy impact.

Like other investigative journalists, Brown seems to resort to the rhetorical technique of gradually inflaming the reader until he will accept any policy recommendation, just to halt the atrocities. A busy author can thus avoid having to carefully lay out and argue his recommendations. The end result is that although the author may be instrumental in stampeding legislatures into action, he has failed to provide the judicious sense of direction that just might avoid another regulatory fiasco.

Brown does devote a whole chapter, entitled "Garbagegate," to the foot-dragging of the federal bureaucracy during the last decade and its built-in resistance to protecting people from toxic chemical pollution. This is challenging material for anyone who believes that Washington will ever be anything but inept and politically motivated when it comes to environmental problems. The section contains the usual lesson for technocrats: Cost/benefit approaches to policy analysis that allow individual rights to be trampled upon can stir up a violent popular reaction and are ultimately self-defeating.

The final six pages do contain plenty of regulatory "shoulds." These culminate in the requirements that toxic residues eventually be transformed into benign molecules and that no highly toxic substances be produced unless the industry has demonstrated a way of rendering the wastes innocuous. Otherwise, we are told, "before the beginning of the next century an intolerable number of acres will be rendered both useless and dangerous." No estimates or analyses of less extreme measures are given. Brown balances his position with the statement, "This is not to suggest that we demolish the chemical industry."

We are not told, however, how to transform the rhinoceros of regulatory politics, whose inherent weaknesses are demonstrated throughout the book. Brown apparently hopes that we will "acknowledge our folly and temper our greed"; that regulatory politics will no longer be dominated by corporate, political, and bureaucratic interests; and that somehow a policy will emerge from the capitals around the country that is reasonable and just to both sides. Somehow these hopes no longer wash.

BETTER, I THINK, FOR US to turn attention to our dismal political system, and to demand a truly independent judiciary that starts with common-sense notions of rights. What we need is the kind of legal process that would have (a) ordered the city of Niagara Falls to immediately start making amends for the pollution from its Love Canal property; (b) apportioned the full costs of restitution for the pollution victims between Hooker and the city based on their relative fault; and (c) considered imposing personal responsibility on those Hooker and city officials found negligent. The process of getting a fair hearing, even on highly technical matters, need not be nearly as slow, inefficient, and absurd as the legal arrangements devised by "our" legislatures over the past two centuries.

Why can't we have a decentralized legal system that allows people to put a stop to particular activities that threaten to poison them but does not impose mindless regulations on whole industries that are inevitably inappropriate to particular circumstances?

In the end, *Laying Waste* is unsatisfactory because it doesn't raise fundamental questions or explore really novel solutions to the problems it spotlights. My hope is that its justified passion won't propel us into an even greater dependence on people and processes that have continually failed us in the past. ❑

FACING WEST: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building, by Richard Drinnon. University of Minnesota Press, 544 pp., $20.00

From redskins to gooks

WALTER LAFEBER

LYNDON JOHNSON WARNED us that if Vietnam fell, San Francisco could be next. Johnson was accidentally correct in one respect: San Francisco, even Boston, was closer to Vietnam than most Americans thought—although that closeness was not to be measured in terms of mere miles.

Richard Drinnon gives us another, and better, perspective. In the mid-1630s, he writes, in the Pequot War, Massachusetts Bay soldiers wiped out an entire Indian tribe of four hundred or so men, women, and children after the Pequots had the temerity to oppose the advance of the white man's civilization upon their lands. But then, the Indians were, in the words of the Reverend William Hubbard, "the Dregs of the Earth . . ., and Dross of Mankind." Some 330 bloody years later, U.S. armed forces—in operations named Prairie, Daniel Boone, and Crazy Horse (the command apparently knew nothing and forgot nothing about American history)—used their massive firepower to kill a million or so Indochinese. Here again, as U.S. embassy public relations officer John Mecklin wrote in his autobiography, the Vietnamese peasant had little to do with "civilization"; his unused mind "atrophies, like the shriveled leg of a polio victim," and he is therefore incapable of reasoning like the better people of the West.

The "merciless Indian savages," as Thomas Jefferson called them, had become "goo-goos" when U.S. troops slaughtered the Filipinos between 1899 and 1902, and then "gooks" in Vietnam. Defining the natives of these lands as outside the pale of civilization, Drinnon argues, made it possible for Americans

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to commit uncivilized crimes in the name of civilization.

Such a book has long been waiting to be written. Throughout the late 1960s and 1970s, scholars and journalists were pecking at the periphery of the problem when they noted, for example, the parallels between the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890 and the extermination at My Lai in 1968, or the analogy of the Philippine "insurrection"—complete with strategic hamlets, body counts, and scorched-earth policies—and the Vietnam War. Drinnon has now provided the best-written, the most comprehensive and scholarly, and certainly the most provocative account of the policy that over four centuries resulted in exterminating "savages" who stood in the path of American expansion.

At points Drinnon is beautifully subtle, for instance in the sections on such figures as Thomas Morton (who opposed the imperialism of John Endicott and the Puritans), Robert Montgomery Bird, Colonel Thomas L. McKenney, Herman Melville, and especially Mary Austin. Drinnon's account moves along with such fresh appraisals of their writing that his analyses recall Henry Nash Smith's brilliant early work which, like a laser beam, refocused our view of formal literature, penetrating into the consciousness of the American psyche.

Most of the book, however, has the effect of a triphammer that pounds relentlessly page after page to make us understand the depth and continuity of American racial hatred and how that hatred polluted U.S. policies for hundreds of years. The book should be on many college, even high-school, reading lists. There is nothing quite like its combination of formal literary sources, Native American history, counterculture values, foreign policy documents, and general outrage. But like any exceptionally strong treatment for a mortal disease, it should be used at first in small doses.

AFTER THIS STUDY, CERTAIN things cannot appear the same. Roger Williams, that seventeenth-century progenitor of American liberalism and friend of Native Americans, suddenly emerges as "a one-man Office of Strategic Services" who infiltrated the tribes and then tipped off the Puritans about the Pequots' war plans. Quoting Max Weber's view that the Enlightenment was only the "laughing heir" of Puritanism, Drinnon demonstrates that "Jefferson's hostility to mysticism, impulse, and the pleasures of the body was scarcely less than . . . John Winthrop's." That hostility, Drinnon claims in one of the book's key themes, has shaped the American character from John Endicott's Massachusetts Bay to CIA agent Edward Lansdale's Vietnam, and it has allowed Americans to rationalize the killing of contrary-minded "natives." The book develops the familiar theme that Vietnam was the liberals' war, and anchors it in four centuries of American history. Vietnam thus becomes no mere aberration, but a terrible culmination.

Nor, after reading this book, should anyone think of seventeenth-century America as an empty continent that awaited civilization. Frederick Jackson Turner, who perhaps more than anyone else shaped both American historical writing and the viewpoint of the Hollywood Western, wrote in his seminal 1893 paper that the frontier was the "meeting point between savagery and civilization." That phrase can not be read the same way after Drinnon's work, for one suddenly understands that what Turner was justifying was American colonialism, when he eulogized the white conquest of the Native Americans.

This Robinson Crusoe syndrome, as Drinnon calls it, appears repeatedly in American thought. For example, Professor Dean Conant Worcester went to the Philippines in 1899 as a presidential emissary to seek justification for the U.S. conquest. "Evening found us alone among the savages," ran one of his more interesting diary entries. From that feeling Worcester could claim that if Americans hoped to maintain their "virility" and not "stultify ourselves in the eyes of the world," they had to conquer the savages. For Drinnon this conclusion was a close relative to Richard Nixon's cry, as he undertook the destruction of Cambodia, that the United States must not appear a "pitiful helpless giant."

As the title indicates, Drinnon has actually written two books. One analyzes Indian-hating; the other, empire-building. The first, built on the work of Berkhofer, Slotkin, Jennings, and Rogin (as Drinnon notes at the outset), is the more successful. The second is less consistent. Although Jefferson's view of Indians is clear (and indeed has been for a long time), no one will understand his empire-building from this account. And Drinnon's real interest in empire-building does not emerge until the climax of his story, a long final section on Vietnam.

After a fascinating section on John Quincy Adams's foreign policies from 1818 to 1825, Drinnon forgets about empire-building until 1898—that is, he passes over the Manifest Destiny foreign policies that increased the U.S. empire by about 50 percent. It might be argued, moreover, that the racial views of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt are as important as Professor Worcester's or John Hay's, but Wilson and Roosevelt are neglected so space can be devoted to Lansdale. The story is thus episodic rather than continuous, and the link between the two concerns of the book is not always clear.

The concern with Indian-hating and its twentieth-century racist variations becomes so overriding that the political-economic context is forgotten—a strange omission, since Drinnon has written a superb biography of Emma Goldman. There is one notable exception. After the Pequot slaughter, a Puritan observed, "Thus was God pleased to smite our enemies, and to give us their land for an inheritance." Drinnon's comment is perfect: "Thus was God a mercantilist," for the Pequot War was for "the acquisition of Block Island and Connecticut." But there is too little of this kind of analysis, and as a result the book finally verges dangerously close to a "greening of America" kind of emptiness. Americans must learn to discern the land's rhythms, Drinnon concludes; with Native American help, "Americans of all colors might just conceivably dance into being a really new period in their history."

That is an inappropriate ending for such a mind-bending book. Drinnon's own work is testimony to the importance of less dancing and more analysis. Not the counterculture, but political organization and their opponents' military ingenuity finally drove American armies out of Southeast Asia. Drinnon's triphammer analysis raises our consciousness sufficiently to help us understand how to avoid future Vietnams, Philippine insurrections, and Pequot wars, and he has done it not with greening in his feet but gray matter in his head. ❑

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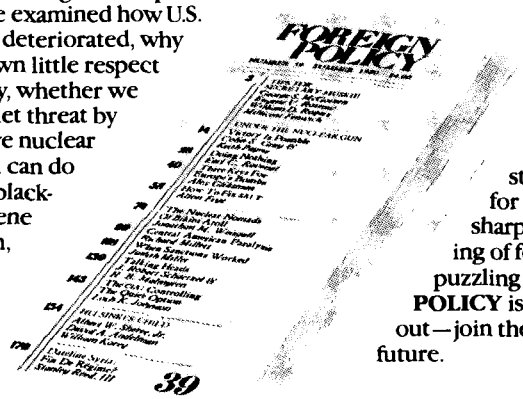

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***AUTHORITY*, by Richard Sennett. Alfred A. Knopf, 224 pp., $10.00.**

Hamlet with no prince

SHARON PRESLEY

"WE HAVE COME TO FEAR," says Richard Sennett, introducing his new book, "the influence of authority as a threat to our liberties." He sets out "to explore what this modern fear of authority is, who are the authorities inspiring it, and what better images of authority ought to be in the mind's eye." A laudable project, badly needed, but the book turns out to be not as ambitious as his statement or the title suggests. Curiously, in spite of Sennett's professed anarchistic inclinations, he fails to come to grips with the most obvious and destructive form of authority—political authority. Mentioning the authority of the state only in passing, he chooses to focus instead on authority in the workplace. But in an age that has spawned Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, My Lai, and the welfare/warfare state, it is baffling and ultimately inexcusable to claim to discuss the "modern fear of authority" and to assert that "the dominant forms of authority are destructive" without analyzing political authority.

Sennett apparently sees the authority exercised by the boss as a paradigm for all authority relationships. "How people are conscious of their work, their bosses and themselves," he writes, "is the basis of authority in society." But is, in fact, the relationship between the individual and the state completely comparable to the relationship between the employee and the employer?

Sennett's ambiguous notion of authority blurs the differences between the two relationships. He speaks of the characteristics of authority as "assurance, superior judgment, the ability to impose discipline . . ."; vaguely refers to authority as "an attempt to interpret the conditions of power"; and, following Weber, sets forth the categories of authority in power as "traditional," "legal-rational," and "charismatic." But these usages mask a crucial distinction: Authority in its proper sense, as sociologist Robert Bierstedt has so crisply noted, should not be confused with competence (expertise) or leadership. Authority commands obedience; competence and leadership exert influence.

Moreover, the state, an involuntary association, always exerts authority, but in a voluntary association like a workplace, it is the individual who accepts the right of the authority to prescribe behavior. Employees accept the legitimacy of the employer's authority only within narrow limits, but the state demands and gets an encompassing obedience that the most power-hungry boss could only envy. Nor are the consequences of obedience and resistance qualitatively the same in the two cases. The employer cannot order employees off to war or put them in jail for refusing to submit to his demands. And the bottom line is that we can leave our bosses; we cannot leave the state. Thus, to use the model of authority in the workplace as a paradigm that can be generalized to political authority is, at best, highly questionable.

An employer, unlike the state, can't order you off to war or put you in jail for refusing his demands.

Sennett can get away with this usage because he fails to cite other contemporary social scientists on authority. He mentions only Michel Foucault, and he ignores writers like sociologist Richard Flacks and social psychologist Stanley Milgram, whose analyses have placed great emphasis on the problem of political authority. Incredibly, though Sennett labels his book a "social psychology of authority," he does not even mention Milgram's research on obedience to authority—the most important study of authority in three decades.

Thus, *Authority* must be properly understood not as a general study of authority—its focus is too narrow for that—but as an "essay" that explores certain kinds of authority. In all fairness, Sennett himself calls the book an essay, but his failure to point out the limitations of his focus ultimately lends the book an unintended pretentiousness. Yet given this caveat, Sennett does offer some useful insights into authority in a work setting.

*SENNETT SEES TWO DOMI*nant images of authority in industrial society. At one pole is paternalism, an authority of "false love" that says, "let me take care of you," but has as its only real concern what suits the authority's own interests. He details the example of George Pullman, who provided an entire company town for his employees—but only on his own terms. A true Victorian, Pullman rigidly regulated the personal lives of his employees, prescribing their drinking habits and imposing a curfew.

Paternalism continues in this century, Sennett goes on to say, not only in IBM but in political institutions as well. (He writes this in such an understated way that one wonders whether he missed the fact that paternalistic government is hardly new to the twentieth century.) He cites the example of Stalin, who frankly stated,"The State is a family, and I am your father." However, Sennett mentions only one weak example in the U.S. government, missing the most obvious and pervasive example of political paternalism—the welfare state. Yet the regulation of the poor, from requiring the filling out of petty forms to conducting midnight raids on single mothers, is in some ways remarkably analogous to Pullman's regimentation.

The other pole is autonomy, an authority "without love," operating "by principles of indifference to others and self-sufficing expertise which absorbs rebellion from below yet exerts powerful controls of shame on those who are rebellious." Viewing the role of the autonomous manager as entailing cool impersonality and with it the ability to control and manipulate, Sennett concludes that "the idea of influence is thus the ultimate expression of autonomy."

However valid his analysis of the impersonal bureaucratic phenomena he describes (and it is considerable), Sennett again indulges in a maddeningly idiosyncratic use of terminology. Social psychology simply does not use the term *autonomy* as he does. Autonomy as the ability to make independent judgments is, if anything, antithetical to the idea of influence and manipulation.

But, more insidiously, Sennett's defi-

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nition leads easily to the idea of individualism as socially destructive, a view currently espoused by Christopher Lasch and Edward Sampson. Lest anyone think this criticism is uncalled for, Seymour Martin Lipset, in reviewing *Authority*, has already used the parallel to support his own criticism of individualism. However, the idea of autonomy and individualism as socially destructive is not supported by the findings of social psychology. As psychologist Alan Waterman has shown in a recent review of the literature, individualism and autonomy are strongly correlated with traits of individual responsibility and high levels of moral judgment that involve respect for the integrity of others. Thus, Sennett's insistence on labeling his phenomenon *autonomy* is both pernicious and improper, detracting from the real problem of bureaucratic manipulation that he otherwise describes well.

The least ambiguous part of Sennett's book and possibly the most useful presents his suggestions for actually dealing with the problem of authority. Though it rejects the extreme anarchist solution of doing away with the chain of command altogether, his approach is essentially anarchistic. His call is for confronting the process of authority in everyday work situations. One suggestion is to require the use of the active voice in the chain of command: no more memos beginning, "It has been decided. . . ." Sennett's neglect of Milgram's study is particularly unfortunate here, because the findings lend support to the idea that dehumanized, impersonal techniques increase obedience to authority. Sennett also suggests the freedom to redefine inappropriate categories, acceptance of a variety of responses to directives, role exchange, and "open discourse about nurturance." In connection with this last, rather obscure demand, Sennett objects to the impersonality of the benefits offered by industry but he is less than clear about what he wants instead.

The question is, of course, whether industry would be willing to try such measures. On the face of it, they seem perfectly compatible with a system based on private ownership and the market, and industrial experimentation is certainly not unknown. But applying such suggestions to government bureaucrats, either in their relationships with each other or with the citizens, is rather more difficult to imagine. On the whole, however, I think these strategies are well worth considering and developing. A further elaboration from Sennett would be welcome. ❑

FILM

DRESSED TO KILL, directed by Brian De Palma.

The razor's edge

STEPHEN HARVEY

*NOW THAT WE'RE ALL SUP*posedly so sexually liberated, you'd think the movies would be one prolonged loop exulting in the fleshly pleasures. Some people actually do seem to believe this, and most of them are appalled at the idea, even if they haven't themselves ventured into a movie theater to check it out since Lana Turner stopped working regularly. There is indeed the occasional film that comes out foursquare in favor of Topic A; unfortunately, the one currently on view is that pasteurized example, *The Blue Lagoon*, which is to l'amour what Velveeta is to cheese.

Certainly where the most conspicuous youngish filmmakers are concerned, however, the present mood is more Augustinian than Rabelaisian. Has there ever been a time in American movies when the subject of sex was so drenched with guilt and peril? Arrant though such generalizations might seem, the recent output of Francis Coppola, Michael Cimino, Martin Scorsese, and Brian De Palma suggests that it takes an Italian-American to make, say, Woody Allen's ruminations on sexual relations seem downright serene. For Coppola and Cimino, the subject is apparently so fearsome that they daren't confront it directly at all; women are but peripheral necessities in their movie worlds, and their heroes seem to sublimate sex by ejaculating bullets instead.

De Palma is hardly so reticent; his most potent movies are flagellatory visions of the dangers of eros. *Sisters* warns that the woman you crave just might knife you in the groin, and *Obsession* admonishes that the girl you treasure may turn out to be your daughter. In *Carrie*, you learn that thwarting all those juicy impulses causes them to rear up and explode; now, in *Dressed to Kill*, it turns out that should you indeed give way to desire, you're likely to pull some sicko's trigger and end up a mutilated corpse. Whichever way, you can't win—once the libido intrudes, you forfeit all control, and the consequences can be disastrous.

Not that De Palma intends these sexual apocalypses as gospel. By channeling his apprehensions into the tortured confines of the thriller genre, he concentrates them into their headiest form and also insulates himself and the viewer from confusing those alarming events on the screen with any facsimile of real life. De Palma's carefully fabricated labyrinths of plot and rococo visual style impose a control that is at odds with all the irrational terrors they presume to illustrate. This is precisely what makes his movies so exasperating, and so beguiling.

Dressed to Kill is De Palma at his purest, which is to say that it's the damnedest hybrid of a movie you could possibly imagine. When it's not cuing you to brace for the next paroxysm, it's twitting you for having succumbed to the last one. Should you chortle at the intricate simple-mindedness of the story or the scatter-brained maneuverings of the characters, it immediately lets you know that De Palma's been in on the joke from the beginning. Watching this movie is like playing Parcheesi with Bobby Fischer—it's a challenging workout, but in the end you might well wonder if it was

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worth the trouble for either of you.

Much has been made of De Palma's debt to Hitchcock, and at times his slavish aping of the master has threatened to blur his own signature. *Obsession*, for one, went beyond homage to something bordering on plagiarism—its plot was a distorted reflection of *Vertigo*, with touches of *Notorious* and *Dial M for Murder* thrown in for piquancy's sake. The tune may sound familiar, but De Palma's riffs on Hitchcock's themes are distinctively his own. In much of the Hitchcock canon, the viewer is the director's accomplice, tipped off to the peril facing the star/victim before the latter has any inkling of what's lurking ahead; the tension comes from watching these characters uneasily begin to grasp the danger they're in and then evade it at the crucial moment.

De Palma's gambit is to pretend that even he doesn't know what's going to spring next, so how could he possibly tip off the audience? It's only logical, then, that *Dressed to Kill* is an explicit variation on Hitchcock's most disorienting movie, *Psycho*; the killer turns out to be a cross-dresser in conflict, whose first quarry is a prototypically conventional woman cut down during her initial sortie into the illicit. Heroine Angie Dickinson fulfills precisely the same function Janet Leigh did originally, complete with being brutally dispatched not halfway through the movie—and in a claustrophobically confining space at that.

DE PALMA'S CUNNING LIES not so much in the way he recreates those *Psycho*tic motifs, but rather in his manner of manipulating your expectations of what's going to happen based on your memories of the Hitchcock film plus all the imitations in its wake—and then tripping you up with them. When you first see Dickinson she's languorously lathering herself up in the shower—which starts your warning bells going—and then she is grabbed from behind by some unseen aggressor. Despite your first hunch, this is a prelude to orgasm, not homicide, and in any case it isn't "really" happening at all—it's just a tantalizing fantasy she's concocted to keep her going while she's submitting to a little perfunctory in-and-out with her unsatisfactory husband. Feigned passion spent, Dickinson prepares for a day in the city, including a visit with her impassive psychiatrist (Michael Caine), whom she tentatively tries to seduce, followed by an interlude at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

This latter sequence, running at least ten minutes without a word of dialogue,

is the most resplendent sample of confident craftsmanship in the last hundred or so American movies. It commences with Dickinson seated face to face with an Alex Katz portrait of a woman staring candidly back at her (paging Kim Novak and the picture of the unlucky Carlotta in *Vertigo*). Framed by some elaborate business involving the loss, purloining, and retrieval of one of her gloves, this episode details the soon-consummated flirtation between the heroine and a lean, dark stranger in shades. As they alternately pursue and elude each other through galleries passing back through time from the modern to the medieval, De Palma silently conjures up all the hesitant exhilaration of the impromptu sexual hunt—queasiness and desire, gaucherie and animal resolve. (Dickinson is in peak form here, with her burnished, querulous eyes and taut jaw.)

Following a satisfying tussle in a taxi, the couple repairs to his digs for an encore. It's after the rapture that De Palma reveals his real fiendishness. Seen in agonizingly protracted, tight close-ups, again in sinister silence, Dickinson pulls herself together while her bedmate naps, and deliberates her next move. Should she call home and alibi her tardiness? Ought she to leave a thank-you note for her inamorato? Anyone remotely familiar with the basic grammar of the horror movie sits coiled, ready for something unspeakable to strike at her from just outside the frame. De Palma prolongs all this as much as possible, then wraps it up not with a frisson, but with a punchline—her discovery of a notice from the Board of Health that her sweetie has a dose of you-know-what.

When the mayhem does come, shortly thereafter, it's gruesome all right, thanks largely to De Palma's penchant for mixing slowed-down footage with sped-up montage, but the visual quotations from Janet Leigh's celebrated demise are so literal as to be distracting. The rest of the film is devoted to Dickinson's son, a brooding, scientific whiz-kid (Keith Gordon), and a dizzy call girl (Nancy Allen) who lucklessly witnessed the deed while kissing off a trick. This unlikely pair joins forces to finger the culprit before he/she can apply a razor to their own throats.

For me, the second half of the film becomes less arresting in its permutations; what De Palma has a real horror of is simplicity. He goes to great pains to establish Allen as a kind of mirror image to Dickinson (both are blonde—Dickinson is a placid *Hausfrau* with a turbulent inner life, and Allen a lascivious pro with dreams of plutocratic respectability). The film is cluttered with literal mirror images and split-screen parallels, but the greater the push for symmetry, the more arbitrary it all becomes. Likewise with the structure of the ending, which replicates the locale of the opening scene except that Allen is the star of the shower—fantasy this time, and she's in the throes of terror instead of ecstasy. It's neat all right, but painfully reminiscent of the finale of *Carrie*, which also goosed the audience for one last shriek after the supposed resolution via a dream sequence not identified as such until the final shots. Isn't it a trifle early in the game for De Palma to start remasticating his own choice cuts already?

Still, the second half of *Dressed to Kill* does include more than its quota of slapstick grisliness. There's a sharply honed nighttime subway sequence that first kids the stock urban fear of a subterranean landscape populated with weirdos and underprivileged sociopaths, and then hints that even the most frayed stereotypes have a kernel of truth to them. In the laughter-defuses-terror department, De Palma gives us Allen and Gordon at a swank eatery, she puckishly offering a clinical description of a sex-change operation while the matron at the next table gags with nausea every time she overhears a word like "penec-

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tomy." And if you never thought you could get a charge out of the sight of anything so prosaic as an empty pair of white nurse shoes, just you wait till the coda of *Dressed to Kill*.

*IT'S A PECULIAR MOVIE IN-*deed that can rouse the ire of both moralists and hedonists, but *Dressed to Kill* has managed just that. Certain literal-minded feminists have objected that only a man could imagine that women have brutal sexual fantasies like Dickinson's here; I think it's more accurate to claim that many women don't want to have such nasty thoughts any more, which isn't precisely the same thing. (See Nora Ephron's funny and illuminating essay on her guilty, dirty dreams in her book *Crazy Salad*.) Others have called De Palma reactionary because they think *Dressed to Kill* punishes its heroine for enjoying sex, a la *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, with her demise a fitting retribution for her sins. Yet that's not what really happens here. After all, it's not her sex partner who kills her, but a twisted type whose resentment she unwittingly detonates. Hapless bystanders often end badly in De Palma's movies, and in this one aspect alone, his films are not so very different from life.

Anyway, it's beside the point to complain that De Palma's movies lack verisimilitude and a progressive moral tone. That there turns out to be precious little cake under all that fancy-filigree icing is another story entirely. After ninety minutes of pyrotechnics the revelation of the killer's motives turns out to be just some convoluted psychobabble about a grievously split personality—all too much like the wrap-up of *Sisters*, once removed from *Psycho*, of course. It's a ludicrous and unsatisfying cheat, yet the fact that this whole elaborate fable pivots on such a threadbare gimmick doesn't disturb De Palma in the least; his attitude seems to be that we've been treated to such a squirmingly good time that why quibble.

The trouble is that this sabotages those really disturbing elements he had introduced throughout, and in retrospect even all that magisterial *mise en scène* begins to look like a distracting excrescence. De Palma is the one who's really divided from within—the glib virtuoso fencing with a demon that can't be bought off with a joke and a tracking shot. As long as the clever side of De Palma keeps winning, we'll just have to settle for a few masterful jolts, when what we're longing for from him is a succession of sleepless nights.

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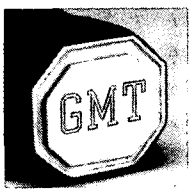

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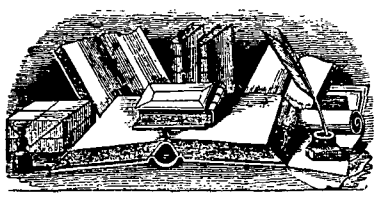

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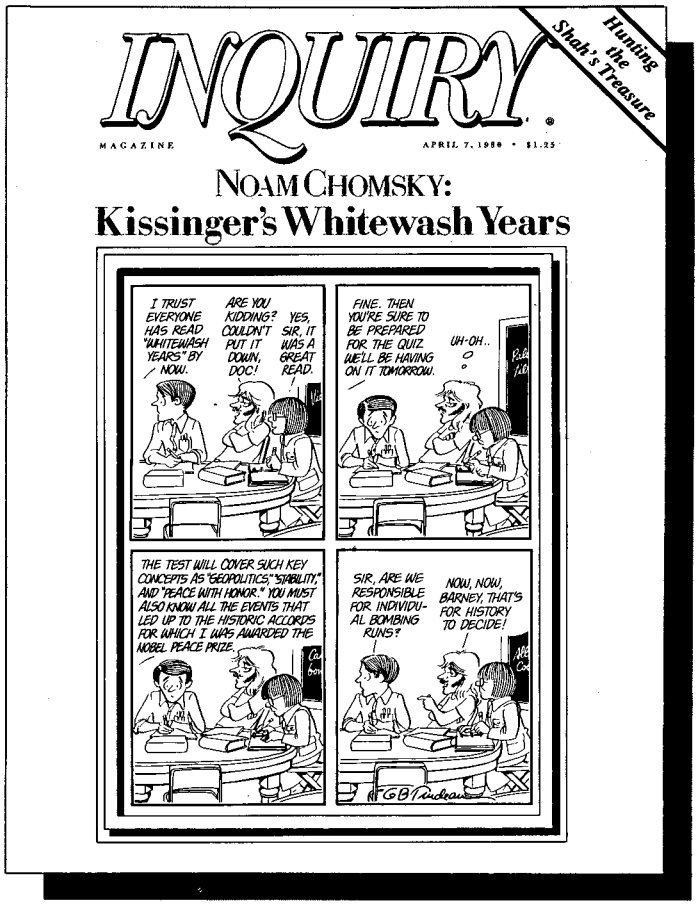
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